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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



## THESIS

TURKEY IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT:  
EVALUATION OF STRATEGY ALTERNATIVES  
THROUGH A STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

by

Halil Tamer Gedik

June 1993

Thesis Advisor

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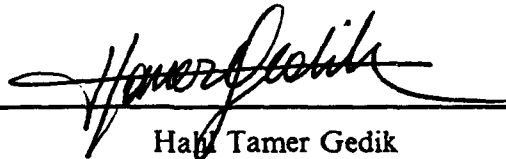
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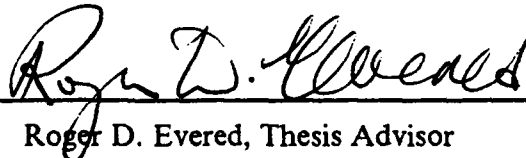
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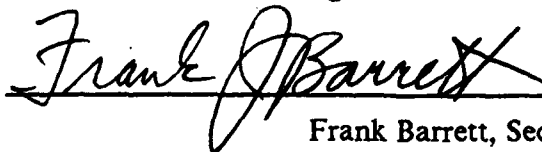


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## ABSTRACT

This thesis provides the reader with a discussion of possible national strategies that Turkey's leadership might wish to evaluate for the future of the country. As with any other organization, Turkey has the task of formulating its strategy and making the appropriate changes to protect its vital interests and achieve its objectives in the changing environment. The author gives a background on the evolution of Turkey's present strategy, and outlines Turkey's current external and internal environments that are relevant to Turkey's strategic choices. Strategic issues are identified and the possible major strategies for Turkey are discussed. Turkey has seen many dramatic changes in its surrounding environment with the end of Cold War and disintegration of Soviet Union, and has experienced several setbacks with its relations with the West, all of which requires it now to identify its objectives and formulate new strategies in order to meet the demands of the current situation and not to lack behind the events. The aim of this thesis is to apply a strategic planning model to the task of identifying viable alternative strategies for consideration by Turkey's national leadership.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
A. BACKGROUND .....	1
B. OBJECTIVE .....	1
C. RESEARCH QUESTION .....	2
1. Primary Question .....	2
2. Subsidiary Questions .....	2
D. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS .....	2
1. Scope .....	2
2. Limitations .....	2
E. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY .....	3
F. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS .....	3
II. STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING .....	5
A. INTRODUCTION .....	5
B. DEFINITIONS .....	5
C. A MODEL FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING .....	7
D. EXPLAINING THE MODEL .....	7
1. Identifying the Present Strategies .....	7
2. Clarifying Organizational Vital Interests and Objectives .....	9
a. Vital Organizational Interests .....	9
b. Objectives .....	9
3. Assessing the External Environment: Opportunities and Threats .....	10
4. Assessing the Internal Environment: Strengths and Weaknesses .....	10
5. Identifying the Central Issues Facing an Organization .....	10
6. Formulating Strategies to Manage the Issues .....	11
III. TURKEY'S PRESENT STRATEGY (STEP 1) .....	12
A. INTRODUCTION .....	12
B. TURKEY UNTIL SECOND WORLD WAR .....	13
C. TURKEY AND THE COLD WAR .....	14
1. Primary Goal of Being a Part of Western Security Alliance .....	14

2. First Backlash in the Relations With the West .....	15
3. A Set of New Developments in the Middle East .....	17
D. END OF THE COLD WAR AND A NEW ERA OF RELATIONS .....	19
1. Turkey Deploys More Initiative to Intensify its Integration .....	19
E. TURKEY'S VITAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES (STEP 2) .....	21
F. SUMMARY .....	24
IV. TURKEY AND ITS EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (STEP 3) .....	25
A. INTRODUCTION .....	25
B. TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY .....	26
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With EC .....	29
2. Threats Facing Turkey With the EC .....	30
C. RELATIONS WITH GERMANY .....	30
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With Germany .....	31
2. Threats from Germany towards Turkey .....	31
D. RELATIONS WITH GREECE .....	32
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Greece .....	33
2. Threats from Greece towards Turkey .....	33
E. RELATIONS WITH CENTRAL ASIA .....	35
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Central Asia .....	35
2. Threats From Central Asia Towards Turkey .....	37
F. RELATIONS WITH BALKANS .....	38
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Balkans .....	38
a. The Black Sea Initiative As a Political And Economic Bridge ....	38
b. Other Opportunities in the Balkans .....	40
2. Threats From Balkans Towards Turkey .....	40
G. RELATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST .....	40
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With The Middle East .....	41
2. Threats From Middle East Towards Turkey .....	41
H. RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA .....	43
1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With Russia .....	44
2. Threats From Russia Towards Turkey .....	44
I. SUMMARY .....	45
V. TURKEY AND ITS INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (STEP 4) .....	46

A. INTRODUCTION .....	46
B. TURKEY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION .....	46
1. Strengths of the Economic Life .....	47
2. Weaknesses of the Economic Life .....	49
C. TURKEY'S SOCIAL SITUATION .....	49
1. Strengths of The Social Life .....	50
2. Weaknesses of the Social Life .....	50
D. SUMMARY .....	51
 VI. TURKEY'S FUTURE STRATEGY IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT .....	53
A. INTRODUCTION .....	53
B. THE STRATEGIC ISSUES (STEP 5) .....	53
C. IDENTIFICATION OF THE POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR TURKEY (STEP 6) .....	54
D. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR TURKEY .....	55
1. The first strategy: to maintain relations with West as before and be a part of it .....	55
2. The Second strategy: to turn to the Islamic World and make its fortune with the Arab neighbors .....	57
3. The third strategy: to unite with the Turkic Republics under a federal system .....	58
E. SUMMARY .....	61
 VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	62
 VIII. INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	65

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

Turkey is embarking on a new era in which relations with the European Community, NATO, the United States, and its neighbors will be ruled by a new set of economic and political facts. With the contribution of its special geographic position--located on the southern edge of the ex-Soviet Union and on the northern end of the Middle East, Turkey has played an important part in the defense of the West during the Cold War. Because of its location, Turkey finds itself in a strategically, economically and politically "sui generis" position which has gained Turkey more attention with the emergence of the Central Asian Turkic Republics after the dismantling of the Soviet Union.

This research explores some possible perspectives for determining new strategies for Turkey in the context of the changing political, economic and military environment of Turkey. The recent significant changes that have occurred within Turkey, the Middle East, Europe and the Soviet Union make up the core of this study. The present strategy of Turkey is summarized as a corner stone for the study.

### **B. OBJECTIVE**

We have been observing the world countries moving in directions that were unimaginable five years ago. These recent developments, which have taken place mainly in Europe, Soviet Union and the Middle East, have brought new dimensions and trends to the evolving World order. Turkey, due to its unique geo-strategic position, was one of the countries that has been widely effected from this new environment. In the light of the above, an evaluation of possible strategies for Turkey is considered necessary. Thus, by taking a strategic planning approach, Turkey's situation is discussed--starting from its present strategy and its internal and external environments, to lay down the foundations of this research. Possible strategy revisions for Turkey are identified and discussed, leaving the decision making to the leadership of Turkey.



## **C. RESEARCH QUESTION**

### **1. Primary Question**

As a result of the changing political, economic and military environment of Turkey, significant changes have recently occurred within Turkey, Middle East, Europe and the Soviet Union, which in turn require re-examination of Turkey's strategy.

Therefore, the primary research question of this study will be as follows: In the light of the shifts in Turkey's environment and its relations with the new environment, what would be the possible new strategies facing the leadership of Turkey?

### **2. Subsidiary Questions**

- a. What is strategy and what is a suitable model to formulate strategy?
- b. What is the current strategy of Turkey?
- c. What are the core interests and objectives of Turkey?
- d. What is the present external environment of Turkey?
- e. What is the present internal environment of Turkey?
- f. In the light of the changes, what are the strategic issues facing Turkey?
- g. What could be the new national strategies for Turkey?

## **D. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

### **1. Scope**

This thesis deals with possible strategy reformulation for Turkey through a general model modified for this purpose. It provides a useful model for strategic planning and shows how such a model could be useful to formulate the strategy for Turkey in the changing environment. The intention here is to come up with some revised strategies for Turkey which the National leadership of Turkey might wish to consider for future implementation.

### **2. Limitations**

This thesis focuses mainly on the events that have taken place during the period of the last ten years. February 1993 is the specified cut-off point but, in a limited manner, subsequent recent events are also mentioned where relevant.

In the external environment assessments, only information that is relevant and essential in the strategy formulation process for Turkey is presented. External environmental evaluations are confined to Europe, the Middle East and the Central Asia, since

these are the primary places in which the developments have a direct impact on Turkey. Other areas which are presumed to have very little or no impact on Turkey are kept outside the research. Additionally, possible changes in the U.S. policies toward Turkey, and the possible impact of developments in Israel are excluded from this thesis.

## **E. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

This study outlines how to apply a strategic planning process to formulate new strategies for a country, namely Turkey for this research. First, the definition of strategy and strategic planning from various books were reviewed. The strategic planning model is taken, for the large part, from Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations (John M. Bryson, 1988), Making Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems (Dennis M. Drew & Donald M. Snow, 1988) and Strategic Management (Fred R. David, 1991). Strategic Planning: What Every Manager Must Know (George A. Steiner, 1979), The Strategy Process (Mintzberg and Quinn, 1991), Strategy and Policy (Arthur A. Thompson, JR. & A. J. Strickland, 1978) and Management (James A. F. Stoner, 1982) are used for definitions in this thesis.

And secondly, by using a broader literature review, the present strategy and the present external and internal environment of Turkey were identified. This literature includes the books published about this subject: Bridge Across the Bosphorus: The Foreign Policy of Turkey (Ferenc A. Vali, 1971), and System and Process in International Politics (Morton Kaplan, 1975); research papers by some organizations about Turkey: Bridge or Barrier? Turkey and the West After the Cold War (Ian O. Lesser, 1992) and articles in newspapers and the periodicals. Major periodicals were the Economist , Time, Current History , Foreign Affairs , and Newsweek , and the major newspapers were the New York Times , the Christian Science Monitor , Millivet (Turkish Paper), and Cumhuriyet (Turkish Paper). All these were used by the author to propose the possible new strategies for Turkey.

## **F. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS**

As a beginning, strategy and strategic planning processes are reviewed from different literature sources to find out a viable model and develop a model that fits the purposes of this study. After a close study of a handful of models, the one that looked useful for this strategy development process at the government level of Turkey is chosen and modified for this case. Then, this model is taken as a ladder-frame and through the steps of that ladder the study is conducted. Thus, with the contribution of each step, the possible strategies for Turkey are developed.

Thus, this thesis was put into a frame of six chapters. Chapter I provides an introduction to the subject, objectives of the research, the research questions, the scope and the limitations, the methodology and organization of thesis. Chapter II provides the reader with useful information about strategy, strategic planning and strategic decisions and presents a model for strategic planning along with some useful tools. Chapter III outlines the present strategy of Turkey through some historical background. Chapter IV presents the external environmental analysis of Turkey while chapter V deals with the internal analysis. And finally chapter VI states the strategic issues and the possible new strategies for Turkey.

## II. STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

### A. INTRODUCTION

Strategy deals with both the uncertain and the unknowable. It involves forces of such great number, strength, and combinatory powers that one cannot predict events in a probabilistic sense.<sup>1</sup> It creates a unified direction for the organization in terms of its many objectives, and it guides the deployment of the resources used to move the organization toward these objectives. As the pattern of the organization's response to its environment over time, strategy links the human and other resources of an organization with the challenges and risks posed by the outside world.

It is true that a well-defined, sound strategy would lead an organization to its objectives faster and more successfully. But, on the other hand, even if every organization has a strategy, although not necessarily a good one, this strategy might not be formulated and stated in an explicit manner. In this case, the strategy of the organization could be analyzed through examination of relationship of the organization with its environment which uncovers its strategy.

In this thesis, Turkey, as a large compound organization will be at the center of our interest. Hence, as a basic step of starting a procedure, the strategic planning procedure's main principles should be defined before applying these principles to Turkey. In this chapter the term strategy, strategic decision and strategic planning are defined and a model for strategy formulation is presented.

### B. DEFINITIONS

Strategy is a plan of action which deals with defining a purpose or mission, organizes the resources, and, eventually, determines the direction of an organization in the pursuit of chosen goals and objectives. In fact, the origins of the word "strategy" go back to the ancient times of the history. From an initial meaning of a role--a general in command of an army, later at the time of Alexander (c.330 B.C.), it was used to refer to the skill of employing forces to overcome opposition and to create a unified system of global governance.<sup>2</sup> In the modern era, though, it is much more accurate and descriptive to

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<sup>1</sup> Mintzberg and Quinn, The Strategy Process , 1991, p.104.

<sup>2</sup> Mintzberg and Quinn, *Ibid*, p.4.

consider strategy as a complex *decisionmaking process* that connects the ends sought (objectives) with the ways and means of achieving those ends.

Strategy has sometimes been defined in the narrow sense of merely achieving specified goals, in contrast to the broad sense of choosing and achieving goals. According to one, strategy is a comprehensive description of an organization's master plan for achieving its goals, objectives and purposes. Another one defines it as the means by which the long-term objectives of the organization will be achieved. Although the definitions carry similar meanings, in one way or in another, there is a point to be made here is: a well-formulated strategy helps to arrange and allocate an organization's resources into a unified and viable posture, with respect to its strengths and weaknesses, anticipated changes in the environment and possible moves by its competitors or opponents.

In brief, the aim of strategy is to build a strong and feasible posture that will help the organization to both define and achieve its goals and objectives, in the presence of unpredictable interactions of the external powers.

Strategic decisions are those that determine the overall direction of an organization and its long-term viability in the light of the predictable, the unpredictable, and the unknowable changes that may occur in its most important surrounding environment.<sup>3</sup> They have control over the organization in several ways. They draw the broad limits within which the organization operates and put the goals and objectives of the organization into a viable form. They also dictate the resource allocation of the organization in a clear-cut way.

Strategic planning is a process that begins with the setting of organizational aims, defines strategies and policies to achieve them, and develops detailed plans to make sure that the strategies are implemented so as to achieve the ends sought. It is a process of deciding in advance what kind of planning effort is to be undertaken, when it is to be done, how it is to be done, who is going to do it, and what will be done with the results. Strategic planning is systematic in the sense that it is organized and conducted on the basis of an understood regularity.

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<sup>3</sup> Mintzberg and Quinn, Ibid, p.5.

Strategic planning for most organizations results in a set of plans produced after a specified period of time set aside for the development of the plans. However, it should also be conceived as a continuous process, especially with respect to strategy formulation, because changes in the business environment are continuous.<sup>4</sup>

### **C. A MODEL FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Many models, for developing strategies, have been introduced to describe the process of strategic planning. The following model is an appropriate blend of several previously developed models for public or non-profit organizations.<sup>5</sup> It contains six steps which will lead to a desired set of results for this thesis:

1. Identify its present strategies.
2. Clarify its interests and objectives.
3. Assess its external environment: opportunities and threats.
4. Assess its internal environment: strengths and weaknesses.
5. Identify the central issues it faces.
6. Formulate strategies to manage the issues.

Figure 1 depicts the flow of the successive steps of the model. In the next section, each of these steps will be examined.

### **D. EXPLAINING THE MODEL**

#### **1. Identifying the Present Strategies**

This is the opening step of the model and actually was supposed to be discussed in fourth step which is assessing the internal environment. It was moved here and made the first step of the model for the reason that this was a governmental issue concerning the whole nation which means a large scale decision making process and also it was thought to be useful to make it clear to the point not to get lost in the subject.

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<sup>4</sup> This section is adapted from George A. Steiner, 1979, Strategic Planning: What Every Manager Must Know, p.14.

<sup>5</sup> This model is mainly based on "the eight-step strategic process" used in: John M. Bryson, 1988, Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations. The modifications are made as a requirement of the subject based on the strategy development process in: Dennis M. Drew & Donald M. Snow, 1988, Making Strategy: An Introduction to National Security Processes and Problems.

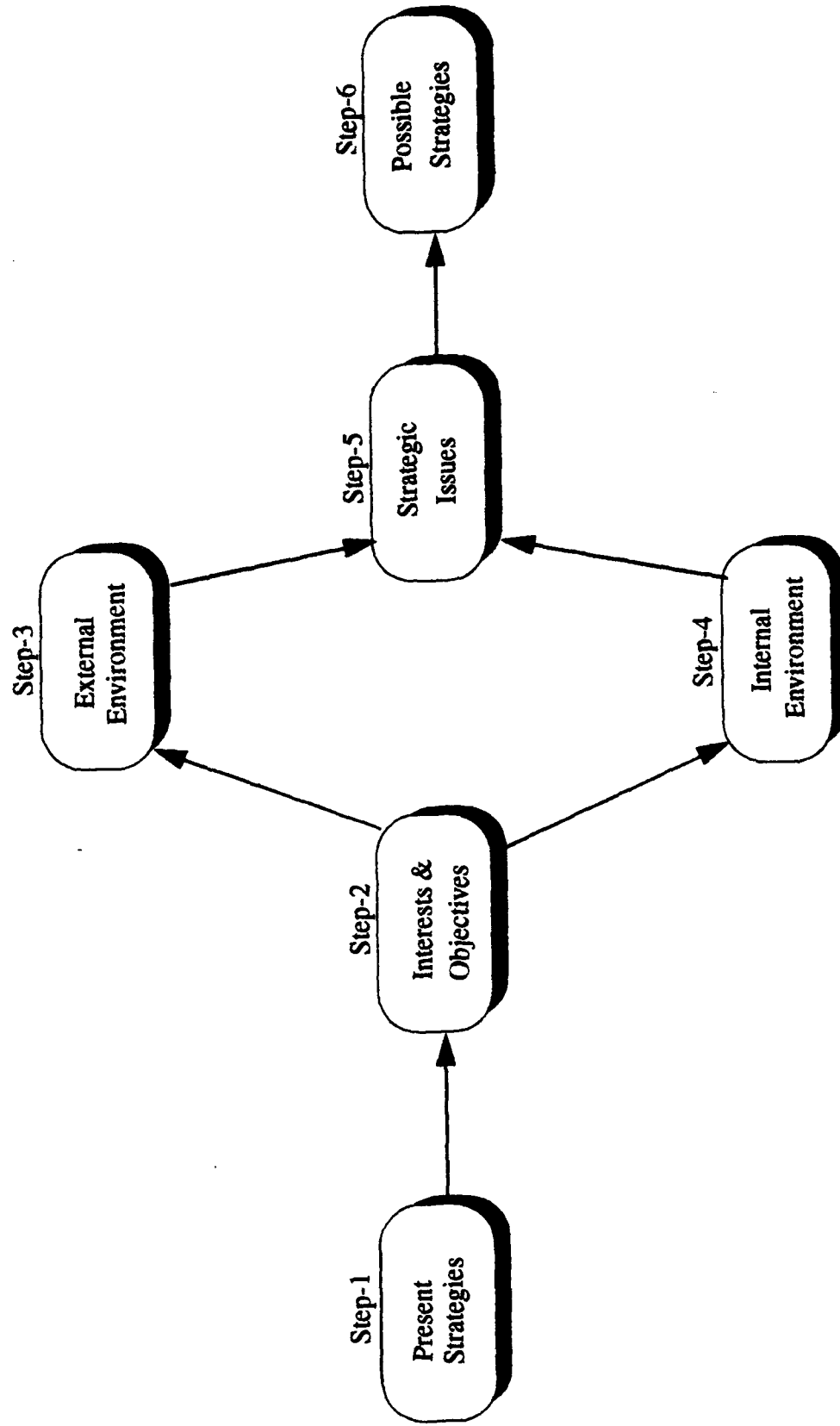


Figure 1: Strategic Planning Model

As stated before, this step will help in assessing the internal environment as well as establishing a foundation for the rest of the process. In this step the formation of the present strategies will be discussed in detail starting with the historical background to clarify the external and the internal influences at the carving of the present strategies.

## **2. Clarifying Organizational Vital Interests and Objectives**

### ***a. Vital Organizational Interests***

The idea of organizational vital interest is a term which is commonly defined by two characteristics. The first characteristic is that an organizational vital interest is one on which the organization is unwilling to compromise. By illustration, territorial integrity is a matter on which a country would not willingly compromise; it would not, if it has any choice in the matter, cede any part of its soil. The second characteristic is related--a vital interest is one over which an organization would go to war. Thus, if someone claimed a portion of a country's soil, not only would that country refuse to compromise its claim, it would fight to guarantee its retention.<sup>6</sup>

### ***b. Objectives***

Long-term objectives represents the results expected from pursuing certain strategies. Strategies represent the actions to be taken to accomplish long-term objectives. In practice, organizations generally establish objectives and strategies concurrently. Objectives become crystallized as feasible strategies are formulated and selected.

Objectives are commonly stated for corporations in terms such as growth in assets, growth in sales, profitability, market share, earnings per share, and social responsibility. Clearly established objectives offer many benefits. They provide direction, allow synergy, aid in evaluation, establish priorities, reduce uncertainty, minimize conflicts, stimulate exertion and aid in both the allocation of resources and the design of jobs.

Objectives, if properly formulated, are the solid, measurable action commitments by which the purpose of the organization is to be achieved. Objectives must be operational, in other words, they must be capable of being converted into specific goals and actions. They must give direction. They must set forth long-run organizational priorities. They must become the basis for work and for achievement. They must serve as the standards against which performance is to be measured.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This paragraph is adapted from: Drew and Snow, *Ibid*, pp.27-28.

<sup>7</sup> This section is adapted from: Fred R. David, 1991, Strategic Management , pp.209-10.



### **3. Assessing the External Environment: Opportunities and Threats**

Basically, "inside" factors are those controlled by the organization and "outside" factors are those the organization does not control.<sup>8</sup> The purpose of the external assessment is to develop a finite list of environmental opportunities that could benefit the organization, and environmental threats that should be avoided. As the term "finite" suggests, the external assessment is not aimed at developing an exhaustive list of every possible factor that could influence the business. Rather, it is aimed at identifying key variables that offer actionable responses. Organizations should be able to respond either offensively or defensively to the factors by formulating strategies that take advantage of external opportunities or that minimize the impact of potential threats.<sup>9</sup>

Organizations can discover the opportunities and threats by monitoring a variety of political, economic, social, and technological forces and trends in the external environment. Unfortunately, organizations all too often focus on the negative or threatening aspects of these changes, and not on the opportunities they present. Hence, the answer to this step should include both the opportunities and threats that the organization faces.

### **4. Assessing the Internal Environment: Strengths and Weaknesses**

The purpose of this step is to assess the internal environment of the organization in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses. To do this, the organization might monitor resources(inputs), present strategy (process) (which is discussed separately in the next chapter), and performance(outputs). All organizations have strengths or weaknesses with respect to their counterparts' functional areas. No two organizations are equally strong or weak. Internal strengths/weaknesses, coupled with external opportunities/threats and the vital interests organization, provide basis for establishing objectives and strategies.

### **5. Identifying the Central Issues Facing an Organization**

The purpose of this step is to identify the fundamental policy questions facing the organization, which are affecting the organization's interests and objectives, product or service level and mix. Strategic issues are important because they play a part in the decision making process, and setting directions for the organization. Therefore, it is vital that the strategic issues should be considered effectively and promptly for the sake of the

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<sup>8</sup> Bryson, Ibid, p.54.

<sup>9</sup> David, Ibid, p.118.

organization's well-being. If the organization does not pay due attention and respond to a strategic issue, it can expect undesirable results from a threat, a missed opportunity, or both.

It is both critical and beneficial to identify the strategic issues. The identification of the strategic issues helps to focus on what is truly important for the organization. This creates a kind of constructive tension on the organization toward the required changes. As a result, clearly stated strategic issues make the strategic planning process real to the participants, if it has not been perceived this way until this point.

#### **6. Formulating Strategies to Manage the Issues**

As the binding step of the strategic planning process, this step seeks to determine alternative courses of action that could best enable the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. The organization's present strategies, objectives and strategic issues, coupled with the external and internal assessment information, provide a basis for generating and evaluating feasible alternative strategies. Typically these strategies will be developed in response to the strategic issues. Unless a desperate situation faces the organization, alternative strategies will likely represent incremental steps to move the organization from its present position to a desired future position.

### III. TURKEY'S PRESENT STRATEGY (STEP 1)

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Every organization has a strategy however imperfect or unconscious it may be. Its strategy may be explicit or it may have to be deduced from its actions and operating patterns. Hence, many organizations continue their lives without having a broadly-defined strategy which is known to their employees. This is also a common situation at a country or national level. As this is a familiar fact all over the world, sometimes we encounter some situations at which the process continues well under control, without existence of any written rules. The same idea applies to the case of Turkey with one exception; it is the statements of the founder of the modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

As both the initiator of the Turkish revolution and the establisher of Turkish Republic, we can find the definition of Turkey's Strategy in Mustafa Kemal's sayings and the main principles of him which are named as 'Kemalism'. With the principle of Reformism he gave the general path to be followed by the Turkish people or the governments which tells "to be progressive and innovative, to work hard to catch up with the developed and industrialized nations of the West". He also declared that the secular Republic of Turkey would be oriented toward West and not the East. In the light of these I would define Turkey's strategy shortly, if needed, as, "to become a part of the west" or "to integrate with the West". The first steps were taken inside the country through elimination of major cultural differences, in support to its long term strategy, to facilitate the consolidation of Turkey with the West, by the founder himself. These measures were crucial at the time, because, they were essential to abolish the previous Turkish prototype in the eyes of the Westerners and to help Turkey to synchronize with the West. The Islamic Law of Shari'a--which is based on the Koran--was replaced by the Swiss Civil Code as the basis of the Turkish law in 1926, and Sunday became the national weekly holiday, in place of Friday, the Muslim sabbath, in 1935. The Arabic alphabet was discarded and the western style of attire was introduced by the law.

We know from the definition, *strategy* is the pattern that integrates an organization's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. In other words, goals, policies and action sequences are the means which are woven around the strategy or strategies that an organization seeks to implement. As this is the case, to make clear

about the Turkey's strategy and to show what kind of a strategy Turkey pursued in the international arena, I will mention about goals, policies (mainly foreign policies), applied and the actions taken by Turkey in the course of time, especially, after the second world war.

Before starting I would like to touch on a subject with respect to foreign policy of Turkey. From the first, direction to the Republic of Turkey was given by the founder in almost all areas of action, including its foreign policy, and was guided by the principle enunciated in the 1920's by Kemal Ataturk: "Peace at home, peace abroad."

## **B. TURKEY UNTIL SECOND WORLD WAR**

After the War of independence between 1919-22, which was not simply a struggle against territorial occupation and dismemberment by Britain, France, Italy and Greece, Turkey, as a newly independent state, followed a neutral foreign policy. If simply defined, that period was based on non-involvement in the affairs of Europe on behalf of true diplomatic relations with European powers, peaceful and friendly relations with U.S.S.R. and the other neighbors. At that time Turkey was much more concerned with the internal affairs and the infrastructure of the country. Because, the country was devastated by long lasting wars, economically weak, and militarily exhausted. So, as a natural outcome, the priority was given to internal reconstruction. This situation kept on the same line for many years, while maintaining warmer relations with the Soviet Union.

But , on the other hand, Turkey was well aware of the risk of isolation, in the presence of the international community, that would result from the neutralism. To avoid the risk of isolation, Turkey put special impetus on improving diplomatic relations with all major powers and developing friendly relations with neighbors. In this context, a special tribute was paid to the relations with the Soviet Union. As a result of the bilateral approach, in 1925, the Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression was signed; which also gave way to the acceptance of Soviet technical and economic assistance in the 1930s by Turkey. This was the period that Turkey kept at a distance from the European powers.

Though there was the assurance of the Soviet friendship, it did not take too long to a cooling of Soviet relations. The rising interest of Mussolini in the Mediterranean and Hitler in the Balkans pushed Turkey to modify her relations with the West, which in turn led Turkey to turn from neutralism in the late 1930s. These changes caused new friendships with the West. This time it was Britain that Turkey concluded a Treaty of Alliance with in October 1939, after the disclosure of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty of August of 1939.

So far, as we see, it was clear cut that the specific strategy of Turkey was neutralism. Only on the eve of the World War II, there was a shift from that strategy, which was also the time of a great turmoil in the world politics. After this brief touch on the pre-war policies of Turkey, now we can move on to the point of interest of the thesis in the following section.

### **C. TURKEY AND THE COLD WAR**

#### **1. Primary Goal of Being a Part of Western Security Alliance**

Turkey during the Second World War preferred to remain neutral and did not directly contribute to the efforts of the Allies to defeat Germany. In fact, the Allies' efforts to involve Turkey into the war did not pay off because of the smart maneuvers of the then government and the eventual Turkish Declaration of War against Germany was a symbolic act aimed at becoming a founding member of the United Nations. This decision must also be considered in the light of the then growing Turkish concerns about Soviet behavior towards Turkey. The demands put forward by Stalin included the granting of territorial concessions in Eastern Anatolia and along the Straits to the Soviet Union. This situation exacerbated Turkish fears of Soviet intentions.<sup>10</sup> These fears constituted the fundamental motive behind the Turkish foreign policy goal of seeking a security arrangement which would ensure its territorial integrity and neutralize Soviet demands. For Turkey the Cold War had started earlier than was the case for Western Allies. Turkey played a very active role in attempts to disclose Soviet Union's expansionist intentions. This active diplomacy played an important role in the US recognition of Turkish fears and the dispatch of the warship Missouri in April 1946. This symbolic act was then followed by the introduction of the substantive Truman Doctrine aimed at boosting Greek and Turkish defense capabilities accompanied with clear US commitments to support the security of these two countries.

By the time the Truman Doctrine was introduced there was general consensus in the West that the Soviet Union was indeed expansionist and that the Cold War had actually started. This manifested itself in Western efforts to form a military alliance against a possible Soviet aggression. The period between 1947 and 1952 was characterized by Turkish efforts focused on persuading particularly the United States and Britain to admit Turkey in such an alliance. These efforts included decisions that led Turkey to be the first Muslim country in the region to recognize Israel and then send a brigade to

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<sup>10</sup> Vali, Ferenc A., Bridge Across the Bosphorus: The Foreign Policy of Turkey , 1971, pp. 32-33.

fight the North Koreans on the side of the United Nations. This was, probably, the only occasion during the Cold War when Turkish foreign policy behavior took such a visible and active form at the global political level. However, this behavior did enable Turkey to become a member of NATO in 1952.

## **2. First Backlash in the Relations With the West**

Throughout the 1950s Turkish foreign policy seemed very narrow in its scope by including just defense and military related issues into its agenda. The only exception to this was the dealing with the conflict in Cyprus and the European integration process. Even then, it is possible to argue that Turkish involvement in the process that resulted in the independence of Cyprus was considerably affected by defense and Cold War related issues. On the other hand, in Europe Turkish foreign policy centered around efforts to participate in the European integration process. As an outcome of these efforts, Turkey joined the Council of Europe in 1950 and then in 1963 signed an association agreement with the EC. These too can mostly be seen as efforts to ensure a place for Turkey within not just military but also Western political institutions.<sup>11</sup>

The period between the early days of the Cold War and early 1960s is generally referred to as the tight bipolar era; an era, according to Kaplan, characterized by the dominance of super powers, in this case the United States and the Soviet Union, of international politics. Kaplan also argues that in such an international political order there is very little room of maneuver for small countries. This is essentially because the two super powers dominate the politics within each bloc they lead.<sup>12</sup> Hence, it is not surprising to find that Turkish foreign policy behavior did not seem to go beyond the boundaries set by the politics of the Cold War. The only time that it could be observed as in the very early years of the Cold War when the new bi-polar order had not yet consolidated itself. However, the transition from a tight bipolar order to a loose bipolar one did cause some changes in Turkish foreign policy behavior.

According to Kaplan, a loose bipolar international political order can be defined as one in which the super-powers lose, to some extent, their monopoly over their respective blocs as well as over international political outcomes, which is primarily because the cohesion within each bloc diminishes undermining the absolute authority that super-powers enjoy. This was particularly evident in the case of the Western alliance as

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<sup>11</sup> Vali, Ibid, p.36.

<sup>12</sup> Kaplan, Morton, System and Process in International Politics , 1975.

the leadership role of the US was challenged by France and growing economic interdependence made it increasingly difficult for the United States to be able to mobilize resources that once had enabled her to affect international political outcomes unilaterally. Furthermore, a loose bipolar order is also characterized by the emergence of a third center of international political activity able to operate to some degree independently of the two super-powers. The Non-Aligned Movement with its own membership and political agenda came to challenge a world political order dominated by the super-powers and the East-West conflict.

However, Turkey does not seem like to be effected to a large extend by this new movement in the international order. What we see is a limited change in Turkish foreign policy behavior during the period of transition from the tight bipolar to the loose bipolar order around early 1960s. While during the 1950s Turkey had remained an staunch ally of the US and NATO, two events in the early 1960s led to a search for a foreign policy approach that would be less dependent on the US and the NATO. The manner in which the Cuban missile crisis was resolved set an example for Turkey of how a super-power, when the need arose, could overlook the concerns and interests of a small ally. The decision to remove Jupiter missiles from Turkey, even though it had been taken independently of the Cuban missile crisis, was seen as the outcome of a bargain between the two opposing super-powers with little regard to Turkey's security concerns. This, questioned the wisdom of a foreign policy that relied too much on United States goodwill for ensuring Turkish security.<sup>13</sup>

The second event occurred in June 1964 and is popularly known as the "Johnson letter" incident. The then Turkish government had been deeply offended and struck by the blunt way in which the United States had failed to appreciate the Turkish concern for the security of the Turkish community on Cyprus. The conflict on the island had escalated to a level where the Turkish government felt that it may have to mount a military intervention to protect the Turkish community there. Such an intervention was preempted by a letter sent to the Turkish Prime Minister, Ismet Inonu, from the American President, Lydon Johnson, which threatened sanctions if Turkey resorted to military means for resolving the conflict. The letter also reminded the Turkish government that American weapons in use by the Turkish military could only be used for NATO related operations.

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<sup>13</sup> Vali, Ibid, pp.128-9.

Unavoidably, these events effected Turkish view and had three consequences on Turkish foreign policy behavior. First, Turkey broke away from its traditional foreign policy of cool relations with the Soviet Union in favor of a rapprochement.<sup>14</sup> Second, Turkey revised its security policy, especially in respect to weapon procurement programs, in a manner that eventually made it possible for Turkey to militarily intervene in Cyprus. Third, Turkey recognized that its failure to develop relations with the emerging Third World and particularly the Non-Aligned Movement. This became particularly important because of the ability of Cyprus to mobilize support for its cause among the non-aligned. In this context Turkey tried to expand its bilateral diplomatic relations with the Non-Aligned countries and shewed a special effort on Arab and Islamic countries. In 1969, Turkey joined the Islamic Conference Organization primarily with the hope of bringing the cause of the Cypriot Turks to the attention of the membership.

It did not seem that these changes in Turkish foreign policy behavior achieved its objectives fully. In 1974 in response to the bi-communal violence in Cyprus, aggravated by a coup on 15 July by Greek officers of the National Guard and the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA-B) who overthrew Archbishop Makarios' Government and installed an ex-EOKA terrorist, Nikos Sampson, as President of Cyprus, Turkey militarily intervened separating the island into two zones. It is quite possible that had it not been for the "Johnson letter" Turkey may have not developed a capability to mount such a military operation. However, with regard to Turkey's desire to gain the support of the Third World, not much was achieved. The Third World, including most of the Islamic countries, refrained from lending any political support to the Turkish position. For the Third World, Turkey was a member of the Western bloc and in their eyes this military intervention only served Western interest in spite of the fact that Turkey faced an American arms embargo until 1978. On the other hand, better relations with the Soviet Union did gradually contribute to increased trade and political interactions. However, this did not in any fundamental way alter Turkey's pro-Western foreign and security policies.

### **3. A Set of New Developments in the Middle East**

The end of the 1970s brought a new outlook to Turkey's environment through some developments in the area and three of these affected Turkish foreign policy behavior. These were the coming to power of a theocratic regime in Iran based on Islamic

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<sup>14</sup> Stuart, Douglas and Tow, Williams, The Limits of Alliance: NATO Out of Area Problems Since 1949, 1990, p.291.



fundamentalism, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the break-out of war between Iran and Iraq. Particularly, the first and the last developments had a profound impact on Turkish foreign policy while the second one reinforced Turkey's determination to remain committed to the Western alliance. It was the challenges mounted by the new Iranian regime to the secular nature of Turkish politics and the war waging along its southern border that led Turkey to research for new approaches. These challenges surfaced at a time when Turkey was itself going through major economic and political upheavals that ended by a military intervention in September 1980.

The foreign policy that finally emerged was one that aimed at maintaining a balance in Turkey's relations with Iran and Iraq. Both regimes were taken as threatening to Turkey. However, these two countries' dependence on Turkey as a transit country was used to expand Turkish exports to both countries and to make sure that neither government threatened Turkish security in an outright manner. At the same time, the realization that Turkey was perceived by particularly oil-rich Arab governments, as a country that could balance the influence of Iran and Iraq in the region enabled Turkey to expand its economic and political relations with these countries. In 1980, Turkey lowered its diplomatic relations with Israel while allowing the PLO to maintain an office in Ankara with full diplomatic status. Between 1979 and 1981 exports to the region increased twice to constitute 44 percent of Turkey's overall exports.<sup>15</sup>

It can be argued that these developments did bring a new dimension to Turkey's relations. For the first time since the Second World War, Turkey with its economic, political and security aspects expanded into an area outside Europe. It is paradoxical that this should have happened at a time when the Cold War was intensified because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the arms race between the two super-powers. A combination of factors contributed to this departure from the traditional mono-track foreign policy. Economic factors such as the rise in oil prices and Turkey's need to find export markets did have their independent impact on this change of policy. However, there was another fact that contributed to this formation in a different way. The emergence of a revisionist regime in Iran, determined to export its revolution to the neighboring countries, had suddenly revealed the vulnerability of particularly the oil-rich Arab

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<sup>15</sup> Foreign Affairs , Vol.62, No.1, Fall 1983, p.166.

countries. Turkey, as a member of a powerful military alliance, and as the only country in the region that seemed to have the capability to ensure a balance between Iran and Iraq, saw its value increase. These countries felt that better relations with Turkey would enhance their security.

A similar attitude to Turkey's role in the Middle East was adopted on the part of the West and particularly the United States. In response to the challenges to the interests of the West, one from the Soviet Union and the other from Iran's radicalism. Both challenges were fundamentally threatening to the established order in the region. Turkey, the tried reliable ally of the West, saw its importance being upgraded.<sup>16</sup> Now, Turkey's function was not just to be a military obstacle in the way of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies protecting Western strategic and economic interests, but also to fulfill a similar task in the Middle East against any challenges to the status-quo. Hence, the change in Turkish foreign policy behavior was to a large extent a product of the increased value of Turkey for the oil-rich Arab countries and the West rather than the outcome of Turkish initiated policies. However, increased economic and military cooperation with the West, but particularly the United States, was welcomed as long as it did not necessitate active involvement in the politics and security of the Middle East.

Briefly, Turkish foreign policy throughout the period starting from the early 1950s to the early 1980s was primarily of a reactive kind. Once Turkey succeeded in getting itself accepted as a member of the Western alliance, its foreign policy very quickly slipped into the back waters of international politics. During this period Turkey went through several setbacks from the West. But, yet, it is hard to say that Turkey has lost its persistence to pursue its long-term strategy.

#### **D. END OF THE COLD WAR AND A NEW ERA OF RELATIONS**

##### **1. Turkey Deploys More Initiative to Intensify its Integration**

The arrival of Gorbachev to power in 1985 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union (1990-92) can be taken as the marking events of the period during which processes were unleashed that ended the Cold War and the accompanying international order. As the Cold War dominated order began to collapse, Turkish decision-makers very quickly realized that they were to operate in one of the most unstable regions of the world.

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<sup>16</sup> Wohlstetler, Albert, "Meeting the Threat in the Persian Gulf", Survey, Vol.25, No.2, 1981.

With the disintegration of Soviet Union, ethnic and national conflicts very quickly intensified all around Turkey, from the Balkans to Central Asia. On the other hand, in Europe, there was an optimistic euphoria that Europe was finally entering an era of peace and cooperation since the walls between East and West were fast disappearing. Many countries in Eastern Europe were embarking on the process of democratization as well as the dismantlement of centralized economies in favor of market economies. With the Soviet military threat's fast disappearance, European countries reached major arms reduction agreements among themselves. These developments naturally led to a very positive climate where it seemed, for a while, that there might not any more be a need for military alliances. This, particularly, affected perceptions of the role and relevance of NATO in this new environment. Even some Western European countries began to argue that NATO had fulfilled its task and that it could be futile to expect a lot from NATO in this new environment of cooperation and goodwill.

This development accompanied by efforts on the part of France, Germany and some other European Community (EC) members to revise the Western European Union (WEU) and give this Organization a major security role in the context of achieving a common European foreign and security policy came as a major challenge to Turkey. Turkish policy-makers that, until then, had enjoyed the luxury of taking Turkey's strategic importance for granted were deeply disturbed and feared the impending possibility of being left out from a WEU led new European security arrangement. The fact that Turkey's application for membership to the European Community had not received a favorable response exacerbated this situation. The possibility that Turkey might be loosing its own powerful connection to the West because of NATO's diminished role was perceived as seriously undermining Turkey's place in Europe.

While efforting to mobilize support in favor of the continuation of NATO Turkey tried to join the Western European Union. There was a major departure from its traditional policy when Turkey began to argue in favor of "out of area" operations for NATO. Clearly for Turkey, at the time, it seemed that the major sources of threats to security would come from the Middle East. They argued that a Turkey isolated from a European security arrangement would become very vulnerable to these threats. Furthermore, they insisted that Turkish political and economic stability could be undermined which in itself would not be to the advantage of Europe. The message was that European and Turkish security were as interdependent as it was during the Cold War period, the only difference was that the source, nature and direction of the threat had changed.

The Persian Gulf crisis has elevated Turkey in US strategic thinking. Quickly after Saddam Hussein seized Kuwait, Turkey shut down the Iraqi oil pipeline that crosses its territory. Further, Turkey granted permission for American military aircraft based in Turkey for NATO defense to be used in any conflict with Iraq. These were not easy or cost-free actions by Turkey. Despite the risks, Turkey saw the Iraqi crisis as an opportunity to raise its stature in Europe. Geographically and historically, Europe has ended at the Bosphorus. Modern Turkey would like, in effect, to push Europe's frontier to its eastern borders.

#### **E. TURKEY'S VITAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES (STEP 2)**

Vital interests normally do not exist within domestic society, but only within the relations (international politics) between sovereign nation-states. The international system does not always have peaceful mechanisms to resolve matters that are vital to its members, nor does it have mechanisms to enforce community will when vital interests clash. The reason, of course, is that since nations believe that some things are so important that they cannot be compromised, they want neither the mechanisms that might reach compromising decisions nor the mechanisms to enforce compromises. Instead, in the international realm, nations prefer to attempt to maintain maximum control over their vital interests, up to and including the use of organized armed force to protect or promote those interests.<sup>17</sup>

Like all other states, Turkey has a variety of interests, some of which are more important than others and some of which could be promoted in different manners. For the time being, the basic interests of Turkey can be defined as follows:

1. Economic well-being: Since the establishment of new Republic, Turkey has been trying to correct its economic situation and to take its place among the developed countries of the world. That is why, except for the times in which Turkish soil was under direct enemy threat, economic well-being constituted the first item in the priority list of the governments. Turkish people are well aware of the importance of economic power as the key step to progress and to reach the objective of regaining the prestige Turks used to have throughout the history.

2. Defense of Homeland: This is a critical issue and important for Turkey too, even, more important than it is to many countries in the world. In fact, we can say that defense of country is on one side of the balance while the economic well-being is on the

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<sup>17</sup> This paragraph is adapted from: Drew and Snow, Ibid, p.28.

other. Sometimes one weighs heavier and in other times the other one. Turkey has concentrated its focus and spent its resources, mostly, on behalf of these two basic interests. Since Turkey's location could not be changed on the map and it is nearby to one of the hottest spots--the Middle East--of the world, defense issue looks like to preserve its irreversible value for Turkey.

3. Favorable Regional order: Turkey has committed itself to develop good neighbor relations in its environment. It does not have any desire on its neighbors soil and does not like either, to realize such an intention from one of its neighbors. In addition, Turkey is also conscious of the importance of the region in which it is located, especially the Middle East, to the Western countries. All these points mentioned above leads Turkey to seek a favorable order in its vicinity and to increase cooperation among the regional countries to move together along the process of development, knowing that a group work will benefit every country in the area better.

In the light of the above depiction, the translation of basic national interests into objectives leading to formulation of the national strategy for Turkey can be defined as follows:

1. To be numbered among the first-class states of the world: Turks founded many states throughout the history, and were, most of the time, to be among the regional or world powers. But for the last 70 years, many people have not seen Turkey as either a regional or a world power, despite being the only free Turkic state. This situation, which is temporary, should not last long and Turkey should resume its respected position, in the new world order, as it was before. Consciously carrying this feeling, Turkey has been seeking after its number-one priority objective of being numbered among the first-class states of the world, in all respects of life.

2. To join the EC: Joining EC is the primary insurance of being a European country for Turkey, in the psychological and physical co-existence with Europe. Professor Seyfi Tashan, president of the Foreign Policy Institute in Ankara, summarizes Turkey's incentives on this issue as: "NATO is our legal foot in the Western camp, but the EC is the real one."<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, from the point of view of the primary basic interest of Turkey, namely its economic well-being, EC membership is considered to be less important for Turkey than assured access to the European market. As referred to earlier, Europe has been the trading partner of Turkey since the time of Ottoman Empire. The impediment of the EC to reach the European market hurts Turkey's economic

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<sup>18</sup> The Economist , June 18, 1988, p.29.

development badly. Either for economic purposes or for political ones, the EC membership is going to be on the agenda of Turkish governments until Turkey paves its way to development.

3. To be a part of the new European Security Arrangements: Now that fundamental changes have taken place in the world order, the increasing uncertainty about NATO's future role and significance has reinforced Turkish interests in emerging European defense arrangements. Turkey does not like to be exempted from these arrangements, since, this involvement will strengthen Turkish foothold in the European camp, and thereby facilitating Turkey's EC membership. In this respect, Turkey's support during the Gulf crisis had implications for Turkish participation in the security dimensions of European integration.

4. To be a regional stabilizer and form the bridge between East and West: Turkey has been going through the process of democratization and development over the last two decades in an intense way. So far it has covered a considerable distance towards its objectives and experienced some turmoils of industrialization. Now, Turkey is in a more stable and developed situation than any other country in the region, both in political and economic terms. Besides, the reality that Turkey straddles Europe and Asia geographically and, also, that it has a blend of Eastern and Western cultures puts Turkey in the position of a natural bridge between East and West. In political, economic and strategic terms, Turkey is likely to continue to be a potentially important actor in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia.

## **F. SUMMARY**

The international-political evolution of Turkey, in the pursuit of its strategy, can be viewed, as we did, in two parts. First, the Cold War era and secondly, post the Cold War era. The first one was, from Turkey's viewpoint, full of twists and discouraging setbacks. During most of the Cold War period Turkey remained in the back waters of international politics, though, throughout this period, it was a staunch ally of the Western Bloc. Basically, the boundaries of its foreign policy behavior were determined by the strategic urgencies of its leading NATO allies. The only times that Turkey made it to the forefront of international arena was in the context of crises in its relations with Greece or Cyprus. However, despite all the unfavorable circumstances, Turkey did not give up moving steadily ahead, along this narrow, slippery path and continued decisively holding firm to its specified strategy which would enable her to regain its respected position in the new world order of the nations.

Yet, since the end of the Cold War, Turkey suddenly appears to have been propelled to the forefront of the international arena. Turkey has replaced its passive foreign policy behavior by an assertive one impacting upon the course of international political developments. Undoubtedly, it is the post Cold War situation that provides the opportunities for Turkey to pursue a more active strategy in the international arena.

#### **IV. TURKEY AND ITS EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (STEP 3)**

##### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The end of the Cold War has brought about major changes in international politics. The most easily recognizable change has been in the structure of the international political order. A primary center of activity in the previous order had been Europe, where the East and West faced each other armed with nuclear weapons. These nuclear weapons and the priorities of the leading two superpowers ensured a considerable degree of stability in the international politics of East-West relations. However, this order has been completely overturned with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism. The geographical area covered by the ex-Eastern Bloc has been thrown into a period of rapid political transformation accompanied with an unprecedented degree of instability.

After a short period at the end of the Cold War during which it seemed Turkey's strategic significance might disappear, a Western consensus developed over Turkey's increased importance in the search and eventual establishment of a stable order in the region. This recognition is probably best demonstrated by the growing number of diplomats and statesmen paying visits to Turkey. Ankara, for these leaders, has become a Mecca for a wide range of diplomatic activity. The most striking of these visits obviously were those of President George Bush in July 1991 and President Mitterrand in April 1992. The last time that an American and a French president had visited Turkey was in 1959 and 1968, respectively.

Turkey is no longer the peripheral country it used to be during the Cold War. It has gained a more central position on the map that shows a new international balance of forces. In fact, in an area that extends from Atlantic to the Chinese border, Turkey is at the focal point of the most sensitive balances, which could be defined in terms of religious, cultural and strategic values. This situation enables it to contribute more extensively than before to strengthening peace and stability and to increasing international cooperation. In this wide area, Turkey will continue to be a lasting and powerful element in the search for international stability.



Turkey is one of the rare countries that is favored by its geography. Being situated at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and Asia with its Anatolian portion--also named Asia Minor--Turkey has been enjoying its being a meeting ground of East and West for centuries. By the legacy of its geographic position, Turkey has played a pivotal role in the defense of Europe and the Middle East by spanning two continents and two theaters of Cold War conflict with the Soviet Union. Now it is in the middle of--and in position to influence--what some see as another potential conflict between the Atlantic community and the restive Middle East and imploding Soviet bloc.<sup>19</sup> And having its neighbors among the most volatile countries on earth, it seems unavoidable for Turkey to stay out of conflict in its environment.

Meanwhile, Turkey, by reaching out simultaneously to East and West, is, in fact, in a strenuous two-way stretch. Turkey, holding firm on its claim to become a part of Europe, is already a member of the Council of Europe and the 24-member Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development(O.E.C.D.), and it joined the Gulf War alliance against Iraq at the cost of losing some \$3 billion a year in pipeline revenues and trade with its Arab neighbor. Now, in its bid to become accepted as European, Turkey is proclaiming its allegiance to political and market freedom.

Figure 2 depicts the principal elements of Turkey's external environment, each of which will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

## **B. TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

On December 20, 1989, Turkey received the preliminary reply from the European Commission in Brussels to the application for full membership of the EC. The Commission declined to open negotiations on Turkey's 1987 application for full membership. By refusing to open negotiations on Turkey's admission to the community and postponing the Turkish application until 1993 at the earliest, the Commission cited the incompatibility of Turkey to the Community in terms of: Turkey's low performance on economy and its high reliance on agriculture; its high rate of population growth (roughly 2.5 percent annually, ten times the EC average) with the prospect of 70 million Turks by the end of the century, compared to a population of some 330 million in an EC of its current size; its having a yearly inflation rate of 60 to 70 percent in average; access of Turkish labor to the EC labor market at a time when unemployment is a problem in the

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<sup>19</sup> Church, J., George, "The Go-Between, Turkey: Islam's Link To The West", Time International, October 19, 1992.

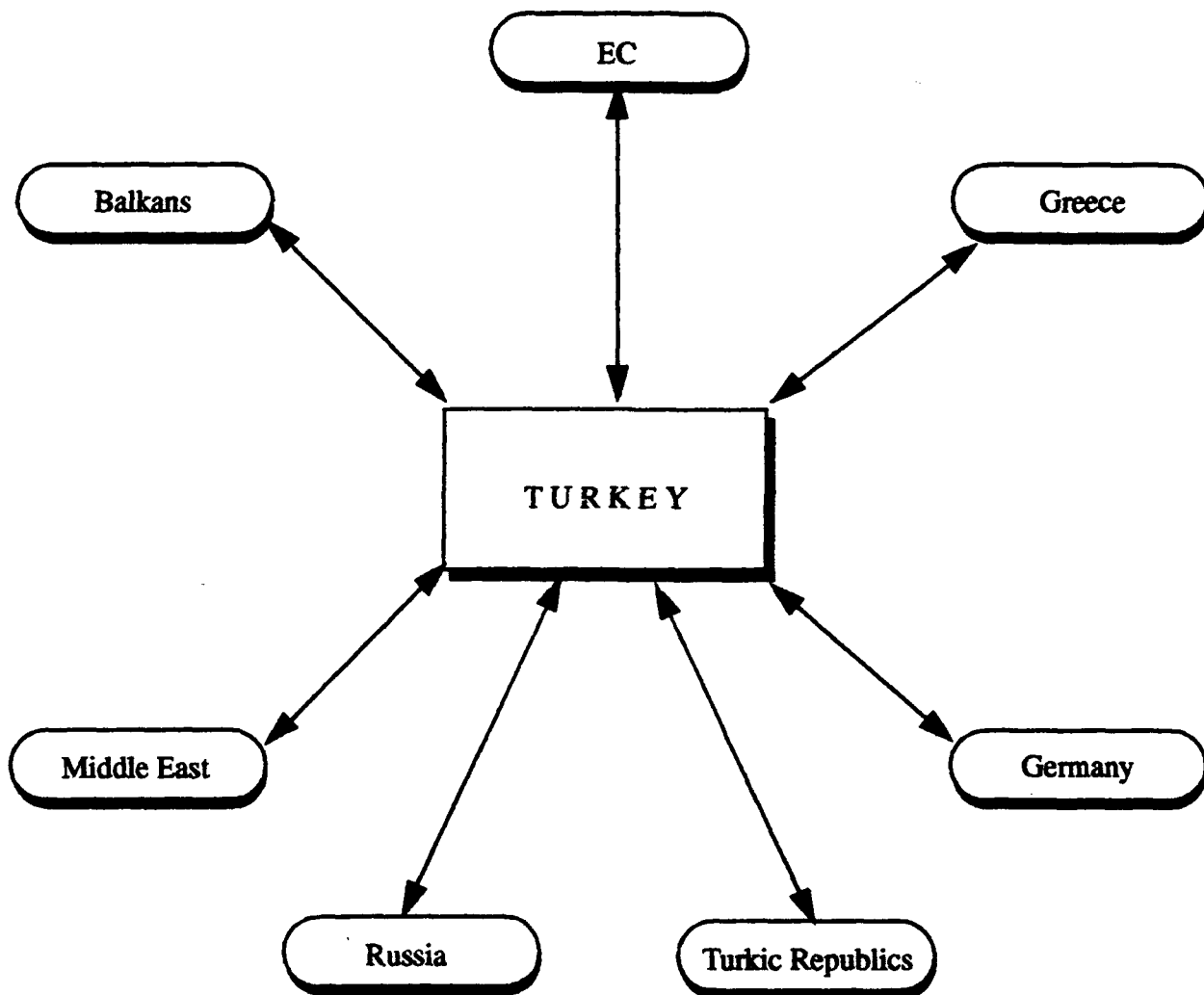


Figure 2: Turkey's External Environment

12 associated economies; and a state-owned sector accounting for 40 percent of manufacturing output, despite government's privatization campaign. Several other reasons, such as its not having smooth relations with Greece, block Turkey's membership in EC, which are, in nature, basically prejudicial and based on social, cultural and religious biases. Turkey is, however, one of the world's seven agriculturally self-sufficient countries to feed itself and to export outside. Turkish membership would increase the Communities usable agricultural area by 22 percent and double European output in a variety of important products.<sup>20</sup>

As the issue of EC membership is not only about the economic inadequacy of Turkey, then the fundamental issue coming into the mind is whether Europe can or should embrace an Islamic country of 60 million. If admitted to the Community Turkey would be the only Muslim member. The Ottoman Empire has long been viewed negatively, especially because of its ancient expansion as far as the gates of Vienna (1529), and because of the more recent arrivals, the *Gastarbeiters* (guest workers) in West Europe, who have not been successfully assimilated into these societies.<sup>21</sup>

Turkey's commitment to the West has also some historical background. Turkey has been a natural partner of the Mediterranean economic system since the time of the Ottoman Empire which was in trade partnership with the European countries of that time. At the present time, though Turkey is in the current European economic system, for example Germany is the largest trading partner of Turkey and, also, one of the leading foreign investors in Turkey, it is not in European mainstream which could be achieved, in one way, by joining the European Community. After the changes in the Eastern Europe, Turkish officials realized that the EC priorities have shifted and some East European countries have a better chance than Turkey of being admitted in the near future and they came up with the idea of an expanded EC, which would include Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and Turkey. Turkey has also formally proposed a free trade agreement with the US similar to those the US has with Canada and Israel despite the fact that the notion of free-trade agreement with the United States is regarded as incompatible with full membership in the European Community. Meanwhile, the idea of Turkey as a bridge between East and West, which is a pervasive theme among the political and economic elite in Turkey, sounds to be more convincing in the economic than the political context. Turkish investments in the former Soviet Union, Central

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20 Lesser, O., Ian, Bridge or Barrier?: Turkey and the West After the Cold War, 1992, p.9.

21 Brown, James, "Turkey in the Age of Glasnost", Current History, November, 1990, p.380.

Asian Republics and the Balkans, even though not so influential and visible yet, could place Turkey into a more attractive economic position for the West and mainly Europe.

The European Commission's 1989 decision was that, as noted before, negotiations should not start, but that Turkish entry should be re-examined around 1993. In the meantime, Turkey was offered a full customs union with the Community--originally planned for 1995--and enhanced financial, industrial and commercial cooperation as a preparation for full membership. A free trade and cooperation protocol with which Turkey was hoping to boost trade in industrial goods with all seven countries--which are Austria, Finland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) was concluded in October 1991.<sup>22</sup> The agreement is regarded as a considerable contribution to Turkey's future integration with the community together with the EC's recent decision to include the EFTA countries in its conception of the post-1992 European economic space. Finally, it is worth to keep in mind that, today's EC, although giving priority to improving of existing institutions and arrangements, is being reluctant to integrate with Turkey. But, an expanded EC, having embraced the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries and perhaps some of the countries of Eastern Europe, may be more responsive to Turkish demand for membership.

#### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With EC**

Turkey seeks its democratization and industrialization efforts, associated primarily with the West and, thus, with the EC. After the end of the Cold War, Europe has appeared as looking forward towards creating a power base in Europe through unification of the European countries in economic, social and, further, political terms. In this respect, the EC has acted as the already-established preparatory step of the new approach. The non-member European countries have also lined up recently, demanding membership in the organization. Turkey's long-standing application has been indefinitely delayed.

In search of markets for its everyday increasing production, both in agricultural and, especially, in industrial products, Turkey considers membership as the only means to overcome the trade barrier with the EC countries. EC membership would help Turkey to organize its development in accordance with the standards of Europe.

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<sup>22</sup> FBIS-West Europe Report , October 18,1991, p.4.

## **2. Threats Facing Turkey With the EC**

There are actually no threats associated with EC towards Turkey. On the other hand, one might consider the rejection of Turkey's membership application by the EC as a threat. But, in real terms it is not a threat. First of all, the initiator of this situation is Turkey and, secondly, there are no actions taken against Turkey that carry potential risks in terms of defense of or economic well-being of the country by the community. All they do is to delay or reject Turkey's application for membership in a legitimate way based both on the Maastricht treaty and their personal values. Their attitude towards Turkey could be taken as an economic threat, only if they discriminate against Turkey in terms of economic relations.

## **C. RELATIONS WITH GERMANY**

Germany remains Turkey's most important partner though Turkey and Germany have been at loggerheads over a number of issues. Turkey's relationship with Bonn is paramount for Ankara, not only because of the extensive trade between the two countries--Germany is Turkey's largest trading partner, a leading source of foreign investment in Turkey and also the largest source of tourist revenues--but primarily because of the roughly 2.5 million Turks living in Germany and the cooperation with the EC.

Turkish-German relations is a good example of the difficulties that Turkey has been having in its relations with Europe at the bilateral level. Germany shares a history of economic, political and strategic cooperation with Turkey dating to the time of the Ottoman Empire. However, Turkey bears worries for the fate of Turkish workers, Gastarbeiters, with the united Germany under pressure to find jobs and housing for Germans. German government has been holding a highly tolerant attitude toward the Kurdish activities and political organizations in Germany. Germany's warm and supporting approach to the Kurdish insurgency in southeastern Turkey has added new dimensions into the Turkish-German relations. In the winter of 1991-1992, a portion of German military credits to Turkey was placed on hold pending the resolution of questions concerning the use of German-financed equipment in raids against Kurdish separatists.<sup>23</sup> As a previous incident to the German withhold of the military credits to Turkey, during the Gulf crisis, Germany responded reluctantly to Turkish requests for assistance and reinforcement from NATO. Although eighteen German Alpha jets were eventually deployed to Erhac, near Malatya, and Diyarbakir as part of the AMF-A

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<sup>23</sup> Briefing (Ankara) , December 23, 1991, p.10.

(Allied Mobile Airforce-Air) reinforcements, this behavior of Germany has left a negative impression on Turkish opinion, which had been already damaged by Germany.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, German quickness in assistance to Kurdish refugees in Iran only facilitated to wide-open the crack between Ankara and Bonn, in a way leading Turkey to think that the German stance was not only based on the appropriateness of action outside NATO's Central Region but also on the reluctance of Germany to commit forces in Turkey's defense. This incident had a particular importance for Turkey because it tested the solidity of the NATO security guarantee to Turkey in the wake of the Gulf experience. Finally, this behavior of Germany caused the President Ozal to define Germany as an unreliable NATO ally. (President Ozal regrettably died suddenly of a heart failure on April 17, 1993.)

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With Germany**

The widespread economic cooperation constitutes the major relationship between Turkey and Germany. This situation has started to develop during the final centuries of the Ottoman Empire in the fields of technological and technical assistance. Today, the past cooperation sparked into other aspects of life. For example, Germans are the leading visitors to Turkey in tourism every year; in 1990, German tourists accounted for over 18 percent of foreign arrivals in Turkey.

Certainly, the most important aspect of Turkish-German relations, in the view of Turkey, is the Germany's being the only country that could successfully promote Turkey's application for membership in the EC. But this has been another frustrating incident for the Turkish side since the Germans have been unwilling to back Turkish bid for EC membership. Germany's concern is primarily based on the possibility of increase in Turkish migrants in Germany by free movement of Turkish labor force as a result of the membership.

### **2. Threats from Germany towards Turkey**

One of the recent trends in Germany that has come into being after the unification is the observance of rise in German nationalism. The increase in unemployment is another result of the unification. These two new events have put the Turkish guest workers' presence in Germany at stake, as being the leading foreigner group in Germany. The neo-nazi assaults on Turks and in Turkish populated areas has increased recently, causing many innocent women and children to die. This two-way pressure on Turks has resulted in the return of substantial numbers of guest workers to Turkey, which, in turn,

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<sup>24</sup> Lesser, *Ibid*, p.14.

would introduce a body of unemployed and, also, cause a loss of foreign remittances having an adverse affect on the Turkish economy. On the other hand, Germany's supportive attitude towards the Kurdish separatist activities and letting them organize in Germany, in a great degree of freedom, has been a sore point between the two countries for a long while. In the winter of 1991-1992, a portion of German military credits to Turkey was placed on hold pending the resolution of questions concerning the use of German-financed equipment in raids against Kurdish separatists.<sup>25</sup> This and several other actions of Germany have added to the confusion and suspicion in Turkey about German intentions and stance on this issue.

#### **D. RELATIONS WITH GREECE**

For the last 18 years, relations between Greece and Turkey could have been considered in the context of unresolved confrontations over the Aegean Sea and Cyprus. In the summer of 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus after the dilemma posed by Cyprus and Greece, which had plagued Turkey's relations with the West and the Alliance since 1964. The issue of Cyprus, which has a certain place in Greek and European minds, has been consistently depriving Turkey of improving its relations with the EC, the United States and Greece. Nonetheless, Cyprus and the issue of Greek-Turkish relations in general, while relevant to Turkish domestic politics, do not occupy the attention of Turkish policymakers and elites to anything like the extent found in Athens.<sup>26</sup> By the same token, by being aware of the fact that Greece is the eastern Christian cousin of the West, for Turkish people Greece is no more than a barking dog, with reference to an old saying in Turkish, which says that "a barking dog never bites", because of its unfriendly behavior against Turkey. But, on the other hand, Greeks seem to take this issue too seriously and the Cyprus dispute has enormous symbolic importance in Greek perceptions.

There is a noteworthy situation associated with the economic differences between both side's island and mainland countries that the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus both enjoy a higher standard of living than mainland Greece or Turkey. The Greek side had a boom after the partition of island which enabled them to make an earning per capita of some \$8,000 a year, about three times of the Turkish side where half the budget is made up by Turkey. This situation might pose a danger to the settlement of dispute in the short run and, also, has been getting more

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<sup>25</sup> Briefing (Ankara) , December 23, 1991, p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Lesser, *Ibid*, p.18.

attention by Turkish side because of Greek opposition to the recognition of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the international community, which is putting the monetary burden on Turkey because of the compensation for the Turkish Cypriot budget each year.

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Greece**

Although Turks and Greeks have a lot in common, ranging from cultural to historical ties (other than religion), nowadays, the problematic issues among two countries are so numerous that both seem unwilling to overcome these impediments in the course of cooperation with each other. The best hope that they can work on it and act like good neighbors could be, at least for the beginning, in the field of economic cooperation. If both countries manage to solve the existing problems in the Aegean, this might facilitate Turkish-Western relations in all respects and help two countries to exploit the economic potentials of the Aegean basin. Members of the business community in both countries are among the strongest advocates of Aegean detente as a means of improving relations with the EC and as a source of opportunity in its own right.<sup>27</sup>

### **2. Threats from Greece towards Turkey**

As a part of Greek antagonism toward Turkey, Greece has consistently resorted to its veto power within the EC to prevent the release of more than \$800 million in financial aid earmarked for Turkey in 1986, which is also to be included as a part of a post-war aid package for the Middle East contribution of Turkey. Greece has insisted on its position that the money cannot be released until progress is made towards the withdrawal of Turkish troops from northern Cyprus and the reuniting of the island. The consistently strained relations reached a climax in 1985, when Athens declared a new defensive doctrine. Following the continental shelf crisis in 1987, the relations reached to another flashpoint, which caused NATO to appeal to both nations "not to resort to the force at all costs." The crisis so disturbed the two countries' leaders, Turgut Ozal and Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, that it set in motion a process of reconciliation known as the "Davos Spirit."<sup>28</sup> This initiative relatively helped to lessen the immediate tensions with little contribution to a long lasting peace settlement. In 1989, Turkey unilaterally enlarged the areas over which it claims authority for search and rescue missions in the Aegean, Mediterranean and Black seas. Taking this act as a measure aimed at towards itself, and responding in kind, Greece uttered its insistence that the

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<sup>27</sup> Lesser, Ibid, p.22.

<sup>28</sup> Brown, James, Delicately Poised Allies , 1990, p.33.



port of Mersin be included as part of the area covered in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations. Athens' concern on this issue was due to Mersin's close location to Cyprus, but, because of its geographic location, Turkey considers Mersin to be essentially Middle Eastern rather than a European port.

A further issue that makes Ankara-Athens relations more complicated, is the existence of a Turkish minority in northern Greece. This is also a controversial issue because Greece, from the beginning, officially does not admit that ethnic Turks live in the Thrace and refers, inaccurately, to a single Muslim minority. The tensions between the Greek and minority Turkish communities over political rights have intensified, leading to the damage of Turkish real estate. However, the Greek government has solved the problem of having independent Turkish deputies--they are two representing Radopi and Xanti--in the parliament, by passing a new electoral law ensuring that neither one of these two deputies is likely to be re-elected. Under the new regulation, a party must now win at least 3% of the nationwide vote to be represented in the parliament, where Turks make up less than 2% of the votes. As it was observed through the efforts made by the Turkish government and president, in behalf of the Bosnians, in the international arena, the status of both Muslim and Turkish minorities in Bosnia, Greek Thrace, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bulgaria is of direct concern to Ankara, not least because of public anxiety about the prospects of further migration from the Balkans (as it happened in 1989 from Bulgaria). In the new environment after the Cold War, key issues between Turkey and Greece are increasingly getting related to development of relations on ethnic and interstate issues in the region.

For the Turkish side, on the other hand, the presence of Greek forces on islands close to the Turkish coast in the eastern Aegean has a critical importance. The proximity of the islands to the Turkish coasts, in some places it is less than a few miles, produces a the degree of sensitivity by Turkey on the issue. By the same token, the memories of the history of Greek operations in Anatolia in 1922 and the continuing debate in Greek political and intellectual circles on the "Great Idea", the ideal for reunification of former Greek territories around the Aegean basin, have had a reinforcing effect on the feelings of Turks that the Greek attitude toward ending the strained relations between the two countries and, in the end, providing good neighbor relations with each other is highly unlikely in the near future. As long as the potential problematic points--such as Cyprus, the Aegean Sea, Thrace and EC application of Turkey--continues to exist, the prospects for better Turkish-Greek relations remain highly uncertain. Another dimension of the situation between the two countries, in the Turkish perception, which is getting stronger

among the Turkish elite, is the view that Europe as a whole tolerates and even fuels Greek-Turkish enmity as a pretext for holding Turkey at arms length.<sup>29</sup>

## **E. RELATIONS WITH CENTRAL ASIA**

By the end of the Cold War, the greatest novelty that the Turkish people realized was the emergence of the Turkic communities right across the Soviet Union, with which they had kinship. These ranged from the Kirghiz on the Chinese border to the Christian Gagauz Turks from Moldavia, the part of the ex-Soviet Union bordering Rumania. The Cold War coupled with its international order had reduced contacts between Turkey and these communities to a trickle. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the sudden appearance of news about these communities came as an initial source of bewilderment to many in Turkey. However, the close linguistic, ethnic, cultural and historical ties very quickly led to both the Turkish government and the public to express keen interest in reestablishing relations with these communities.

After the initial confusion was over, Turkish people got more enthusiastic about the level and nature of the new relationship when the larger of these communities declared independence as the Soviet Union disintegrated. Promptly, Azerbaijan from the Caucasus followed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in Central Asia were recognized by Turkey, and Turkey also was among the very first countries to open diplomatic representations. The Central Asian Republics, all of which but Tajikistan speak dialects of Turkish, express close identification with Turkey. More importantly, with the appearance of the Turkic Republics as independent countries in the international order, Turkey has promoted to a higher position in the eyes of the Western countries.

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Central Asia**

The close ties that Turkey enjoys with the Central Asian republics has, in an obvious way, increased the importance of Turkey for the West. Almost, every major western politician and statesmen has expressed the importance of Turkey for helping to build a bridge between Turkey and these Central Asian republics. The keen interest that the West has in the Central Asia results from a number of reasons. Central Asia has a very important geo-strategic location bordering Russia, China, India and Iran. Furthermore, they have many resources to offer to the West including oil and natural gas, and

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<sup>29</sup> Brown, John Murray, "Turkey Survey", Financial Times, May 20, 1991.

also their relatively underdeveloped economies is likely to constitute profitable markets for western goods and services in the future.

The West is well aware that for close relationships to develop, and that for their interests to be satisfied, evolving political system in the region would have to be one that incorporates western values such as secularism, pluralist democracy, human rights and economic liberalism. However, these are countries that have had no or very little experience in respect to these values. By and large, these are relatively alien values in the political cultures of these societies. Furthermore, the dominant religion is Islam and after having been repressed for many decades--this started after the 1917 Revolution and continued until 1987 for 70 years--it is making a powerful political comeback. What makes the West worried is that Iran might be successful in exporting its version of political Islam. This possibility precipitated a Western fear that politicized Islam might lead to the eventual development of regimes hostile to western values and interests. Certainly, the situation has reminded the West of the distance that Turkey as an Islamic country has covered in consolidating a secular regime based on pluralist democracy, which makes Turkey important to the West. Because Turkey, muslim but market oriented and friendly to the U.S. and West, is seen as a country that could constitute a reference point for these Central Asian republics as well as a transmission belt for these values.

Meanwhile, Turkey has adopted a strategy that aims to mobilize its cultural, ethnic and linguistic ties to the Turkic republics in Central Asia. It has tried to play on the political and economic progress it has achieved as hard evidence of the advantages associated with the Turkish model of development. Turkey's approach also includes the incorporation of the West in efforts to bring development to this area. Hence, Turkey is put in a position of building a bridge between the West and Central Asia. In this respect, it has already played a very significant role in getting these republics to join and participate in the work of the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE). This role of Turkey is seen as particularly important in terms of ensuring the integration of these countries in a forum whose ultimate aim is to ensure the dissemination and application of political values preferred by Turkey. Turkey is also actively involved in the construction of telecommunication networks that is seen as an essential precondition of incorporating the public in this process too.

So far, it seems as though the Turkish model for development is receiving greater attention, at least, by the ruling elite. One manifestation of this is that most of these republics, with the exception of Tajikistan, has accepted or is about to accept the adoption of the Latin script instead of the Arabic. Obviously, the adoption of the Latin

script is going to have significant political implications. This will enable Turkey to play a much greater role as communication between Turkey and these countries becomes facilitated. Hence, it is not surprising that Turkey has actively pushed for the Latin script as well as providing the equipment and the know-how for the script. Of course, the elite in most Central Asian republics is also aware that it is the West that can really provide the kind of resources needed for developing their economies. Naturally, Turkey's relations with the West is also another factor that makes Turkey attractive to this elite.

## **2. Threats From Central Asia Towards Turkey**

There is no likely threat from Central Asian Turkic Republics towards Turkey that exists or is foreseeable other than the potential threat that the ongoing Azeri-Armenian fighting poses. With the end of the Cold War and the Collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey suddenly found itself in a vast sea of instabilities. The number of states in the immediate vicinity of Turkey increased. Most of these states became very quickly embroiled in intra or inter-state conflicts of the kind that became threatening to Turkish security. In this respect, Azerbaijan's conflict with Armenia takes the highest place in importance for Turkey because of the simple fact that Turkish people have a kinship with the Azeri people.

In fact, the Caucasus, as a whole, is a difficult region and even more difficult than the Balkans, because of its racial and religious composition's being more complicated. There are many different races, tribes and religions. The eruption of conflicts did not take long after separation of region from the formal Soviet Union. Important of all was the revival of the Armenian-Turkish conflict, which cost many lives on both the Turkish and Armenian sides and also created a distorted wrong image and misunderstanding of Turkish people in the minds of the Westerners through intentional misrepresentation of the case in favor of the Armenians. This recent phase of the historical hatred recalls into the minds of Turkish people the past sufferings caused by the Armenians in 1915, which is now causing them to pressure the government to something to relieve the suffering of their Azeri brethren. In addition to this, the continuous demands for help from the Azerbaijan government and people made things more difficult for the Turkish government, which at the same time has been trying to lessen the pressure from the Europeans to let them use Turkish air space and land transportation to provide Armenians with food stock against the effective Azeri blockade.

But it is not that easy for Turkey to help Azerbaijan, because Russia still retains its interests in the area and pays too much attention to Turkey's relations with the Turkic Republics. Moreover, the existence of Russian divisions in Armenia--located

near the Turkish border--makes Turkey's military intervention into the conflict more difficult to favor Azerbaijan more difficult while still unwilling to get involved in the conflicts of the Caucasus, Turkey put too much effort to help end the fighting and reach to a peaceful solution.

## **F. RELATIONS WITH BALKANS**

Turkey always had interests in Balkans dating back to the Ottoman rule over the area for several centuries. Today, the Muslim and Turkish minorities which spread through the Balkans represent the legacy of the Ottoman Empire for Turkey. They also poses a special importance in the eyes of the Turkish people for both racial and religious reasons.

Turkey had hard times with communist Bulgaria during the 1980s. The Bulgarian communist leadership, in a major departure from established practice, began to introduce in 1985 extremely repressive measures against the Turkish minority in this country. Finally, these repressive measures culminated in a mass exodus of Turks from Bulgaria, causing the Turkish authorities to open the borders to the refugees until numbers became overwhelming. After the collapse of the Communist Regime in Bulgaria, today, relations between two countries are very positive and promising. Bulgaria seems to be a rare country that in the past Cold War era has succeeded in integrating a large ethnic minority into main stream politics. The Movement for Rights and Freedom, that mostly represents the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, emerged as the third largest political party from the Bulgarian national elections in October 1991 after having received 7.3% of the votes. The leader of the party, Ahmet Dogan, became the first Bulgarian Turk to become the vice-president of the Bulgarian Parliament. Furthermore, the two governments have increased contacts with each other and have signed an agreement for friendship, cooperation and security.<sup>30</sup> More recently the General Staff of both countries met and further to this meeting, in a gesture of goodwill, Turkey withdrew military units away from the Bulgarian border.<sup>31</sup>

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey with Balkans**

#### **a. *The Black Sea Initiative As a Political And Economic Bridge***

The possibility of being excluded by Europe has caused Turkey to be more active in securing its regional co-existence. This interaction was, in a way, a result of the

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<sup>30</sup> *Cumhuriyet* , May 7, 1992.

<sup>31</sup> *Milliyet* , July 2, 1992.

movement to pursue regional cooperation in southern Europe. Hence, the Turkish government initiated the idea for a Black Sea Economic Cooperation Project, which was paid considerable attention by President Ozal and given prominence in his discussions with President Bush and President Gorbachev during the period of formation of the project. The project is expected to play an important role in the development of the region's countries which are in the phase of developing and correcting their economies. Turkey believes that this project will help to develop the infrastructure along the shores of the Black Sea and to meet the needs of businessmen. Moreover, the integration of the member countries into the European and world economies will be facilitated by the project.

Turkey, by proposing for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, aimed at the gradual establishment of a free trade zone among the states, mainly, surrounding the Black Sea. The project is intended to develop and diversify economic relations among the member countries. Cooperation in the fields of transportation and communications, statistics, economic and commercial information exchange, energy, mining, the processing of raw materials, the standardization of products, tourism, agriculture, agricultural industry, veterinary and health protection, the pharmaceutical industry, and the environment are cited as possibilities for future projects.<sup>32</sup> Initial priorities include the establishment of more favorable conditions for trade and investment among the member states, improvements in communications and administrative reforms aimed at encouraging commercial contacts. It is also noted that the study would be started to establish a Black Sea foreign trade and investment bank, which would assist in the transfer of capital from third countries with the aim of developing the volume of trade and investment between member countries.

Turkey attaches great importance to the project in the hope in creating a new economic and social center in the area. Turkey, also, aims at to increase its trade volume and investment across the Black Sea, embracing Moscow and the Turkic Republics. In this context, the Black Sea Economic Zone Agreement will form the basis of Turkey's relations with the republics. Turkey has already established direct economic and political relations with these republics in accordance with this agreement, which has been upheld by Moscow. Turkey's leading industries of the construction and pharmaceuticals, which have been particularly active in developing commercial ties in

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<sup>32</sup> FBIS - West Europe Report , February 4, 1992, p.49.

these Turkic republics, had established their involvement, even, in broader terms than they were expected.

*b. Other Opportunities in the Balkans*

Prospects for Turkish trade with Bulgaria and Rumania are good, though the present volume is low. Of all the post-communist European countries, Bulgaria and Rumania are attracting the least Western interest, which leaves the door open for Turkey. Proximity and relatively developed light industrial base also count in Turkey's favor.

Turkey is also promoting the idea of a "Balkan cooperation zone," which would include the former Yugoslavia, Albania, Rumania, and Bulgaria. That initiative may influence Greece to change its hostile attitude toward Turkey, according to Turkish officials.

**2. Threats From Balkans Towards Turkey**

Balkans had always posed a potential threat towards Turkey due to existence of the Muslim and Turkish minorities in the Balkan countries. The recent example of this situation in Bosnia has been experienced through the break-up of Yugoslavia which was initially opposed by Ankara, arguing that the disintegration of federal power would unleash murderous ethnic wars. As it turned out to be so, Ankara was correct with its belief. Since the start of the conflict in Bosnia, the government in Turkey has been under enormous pressure by both the people and the press, who are demanding government to do something positive, though, it is not as easy as that. The prospects for the spread of Yugoslavian war are still very much alive which may, which may eventually lead to further conflict between Greece and Turkey.

**G. RELATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST**

Turkey attaches great importance to cultivating close, friendly relations and cooperating with all Arab and Islamic countries. The cultural and human affinity between Turkey and these countries creates a favorable climate for the development of cooperation. Conflicts and military confrontations in the Middle East prevent the restoration of peace and order, that would be conducive to economic development. The growth of cooperation in this region, which has vast energy sources and great agricultural potential, will help ease political tensions and will also serve global peace and stability.

Turkey wants to play an active role in the region, both politically and economically. But while doing so, she takes care not to get involved in regional disagreements or to take sides. Turkey believes that the adoption of gradual confidence-building measures among the regional countries will help reduce the risk of war.

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With The Middle East**

The major opportunity that Turkey may seek with its Middle Eastern neighbors is a wide range cooperation in the field of economics. Turkey has been exporting to these countries, mostly, agricultural and chemical products and mechanical equipment while importing oil. Actually these countries do not have too much to offer to Ankara, but they might help Turkey by an easy access to the oil they possess for the most. For example, Turkey's trade with its Arab neighbors in 1989 amounts to 21% of its total trade. But with the Gulf crisis Turkey lost almost all of its Iraqi market because of the United Nations' sanctions. If Turkey succeeds in providing the Middle Eastern markets with the goods that it has an ability to produce, this will have a very positive effect on the growing Turkish economy. Creating an Islamic Common Market is the most possible alternative within this context, that might entice many Middle Eastern countries. Instead of importing everything from others, like Europe, they first might begin to meet most of their needs among themselves, except for the high technology products.

### **2. Threats From Middle East Towards Turkey**

Prior to the Iran-Iraq war and the process of militarization by Turkey's neighbors, including Syria, Turkey's main security concerns were with Thrace and the Caucasus. The rapid changes in the Middle East, which might be considered, in a way, to have started with the Iranian Revolution, and continued with the Iran-Iraq War, made Turkey realize the weaknesses in defense of its southern region, especially, its Middle Eastern borders. Before and during the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq was normally Turkey's most important market in the Middle East. Iraq also depended on the pipeline from Kirkuk to Yumurtalik, on the Mediterranean coast, for about half of its oil exports. This situation was not unnoticed by the Turkish officials concerned with security in the area. The Gulf war and its aftermath have simply confirmed and reinforced emerging perceptions about the regional ambitions and expanding arsenals across Turkey's borders, not least the growing threat from weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic missiles of increasing range and accuracy.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Lesser, *Ibid*, p.28.



The determined efforts by Ankara to facilitate the allied coalition's operation in the Gulf involved substantial risks for Turkey at that time and afterwards. In the first instance, it exposed the country to attack from the south where vast numbers of Iraqi forces--both conventional and unconventional threat to Turkey, equipped with long range missiles--were deployed following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Secondly, the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) reestablished itself in Iraq and mounted new attacks inside Turkey following the end of the Iran-Iraq War. Turkey's subsequent involvement in crossborder operations, aimed at suppressing it, have drawn Turkey closer to the problem of Iraq's future. Turkish concern over the Kurdish problem led Ankara in 1986 to notify the United States and Iran that if Iraq were defeated by Tehran and the state were to disintegrate, it would demand the return of Mosul and the great northern oil basin of Kirkuk--a claim that dates back to Turkey's loss of the region in 1926.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, for the problems that Turkey would face in the case of an occupation of the Mosul area, such as the difficulty of incorporating even more Kurds into Turkey, Turkey--along with Iran and Syria--was content to see Iraq keep its own borders since it has been a long-lasting policy of Turkey to respect the territorial integrity of regional states.

In the light of the fact that Syria is widely known to have been providing bases and other support to the PKK (the PKK and Dev Sol, the leftist terrorist organization, have been allowed to establish training bases in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley), Turkey has long been at odds with the neighboring Syria. Coupled with the continuing Syrian claim over Turkish Antioch, Turkish concerns, with respect to Syrian attitude, have grown respectively with the increasing terrorist activities of the PKK. In addition to these issues, the friction over distribution of the Tigris and Euphrates waters, which are under control of Turkey since the rivers rise in central Turkey, makes the situation more complex. All three countries, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, rely on the Euphrates for irrigation and electricity generation. Turkey launched the project, which is called Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP), for the development of the Turkish part of the Tigris and Euphrates basins in 1980. Syria and Iraq have alleged that the construction of the giant Ataturk Dam, which is the centerpiece of the project will severely restrict the downstream flow. Turkey strongly opposed to this claim, saying that the dam would better control the flow of Euphrates River and that the restriction on the amount of water was unacceptable even to Turkey for the electricity generation purposes.

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<sup>34</sup> Kuniholm, R., Bruce, "Turkey And The West", Foreign Affairs, 1991, Vol.70, No.2, p.45.

Turkey's relations with Iraq and Syria were further strained and a crisis arose in January-February 1990 when Ankara decided to cut the flow of the Euphrates River, to allow the reservoir behind the Ataturk Dam to begin filling. Turkey increased the amount of water flow two months before the cut-off and unblocked the river in one month as it promised before. Both Syria and Iraq were furious and worried, fearing that Turkey might use the water as a weapon, despite Turkey's repeated assurances that the cut-off was necessary for technical reasons. It was suggested that, in political terms, the cut-off emphasized Turkey's relative strength in the region; control over the waters did provide Ankara with significant leverage and it took advantage of this privilege in the later stages of the conflict-solving process.

Iraq and Syria have each proposed a trilateral accord that would determine the sharing of these waters. Although Turkey is unlikely to abandon the South Anatolia Project, after a lengthy process of discussions Ankara assured that. Turkey would provide Syria with an average cross border flow 500 cubic meters per second. In turn, Syria would close the PKK bases in the Bekaa Valley and would cooperate with Turkey in securing its borders with Turkey to control terrorist infiltration into Turkey. When finished, the GAP, more than any other program, has the potential over the coming decades to change the face not only of southeastern Turkey but of its neighbors as well. This project will also go far toward integrating the Kurds, both economically and socially, into the rest of Turkish society.<sup>35</sup>

#### **H. RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA**

Turkey intends to maintain her stable relations with Russia according to the concept of constructive cooperation based on mutual trust. It was believed that the positive developments in East-West relations that has started with the introduction of Glasnost and Perestroika policies adopted by the former Soviet Union, would have a positive effect on Turco-Russian relations--and so did. Turkey closely follows the grounds covered in arms control talks and the policies pursued by Russia against the region where Turkey is situated. Contacts between the two countries at various levels are being promoted and encouraged. The two sides signed a 10-year Program in 1984 envisaging increases in economic cooperation and trade exchanges and an agreement on commodity exchanges for the 1986-1990 period. The Natural Gas Agreement signed between the two countries in September 1984 was also of major significance. Long-term agreements signed with the

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<sup>35</sup> Brown, Ibid, p.393.

former Soviet Union enabled Turkey to import Russian natural gas and increase exports to that country. The opportunities offered to Turkish contractors to do business in Russia have also created new possibilities of increased cooperation. The use of former Soviet air space by Turkish planes flying to the Far East was also another noteworthy development.

### **1. Opportunities Facing Turkey With Russia**

Russia is now working on rebuilding itself along the lines of democratization and market economies. It is also one of the several countries to take Turkey's past experiences on democratization and market economies as a guide to its own recently started process. There are many fields that Turkey can actively take place and join forces with Russia to help its re-construction. For example, Turkey's construction firms already signed many contracts with Russia to build large facilities or housing areas. Russia, with its Western orientation, carries vast economic opportunities for Turkey, which Turkey can exploit with its present assets.

### **2. Threats From Russia Towards Turkey**

The Soviet Union went through a rapid phase of disintegration, but the developments in Russia and other recently freed republics of the Soviet Union are still unpredictable, despite their efforts toward democratization. The democracies and market economies that have begun flowering in Eastern Europe remain fragile. Since they are growing on barren soil that has been untended for so long, their success can not be taken for granted. The collapse of Soviet Union has also stirred regional tensions and flared nationalisms throughout much of Soviet Union itself, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe. No doubt, freedom without food is an empty promise and, in an attempt to divert the disillusionment of the people, disputes over borders or ethnic minorities may be exploited by irresponsible elements. Turkey, being located close to several such ethnic disputes around its ex-borders with Soviet Union, has been watching carefully and showing caution about getting involved into these conflicts. The Turkish government has been under a long-lasting pressure, over the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan, by the people and the press.

On the other hand, despite conventional force reductions, Russia remains a military superpower, and the potential power of the ex-Soviet armed forces will persist after all troops return to their national borders. Hence, Turkey still carries some of the past worries with Russia and has been looking forward to being a part of a possible European defense initiative, especially after clarification of NATO's unclear future role.

## **I. SUMMARY**

After the waning of the Soviet threat on Turkey, Turkey is becoming more subject to the threat from The Middle East and to get involved in the Middle Eastern affairs. But, on the other hand, the opportunities, which Turkey is now facing through the Central Asian republics, are forming a counter-balance to this threat and might help Turkey to avoid that adverse situation. It depends on, presumably, how Turkey handles the issues in this new environment.

This chapter outlines the key features and forces in Turkey's external environment, in terms of relations with the countries of its major interest. This section has briefly defined the present situation as a basis for formulating the future strategies. Then the opportunities and threats that are facing Turkey were explained.

## **V. TURKEY AND ITS INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (STEP 4)**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In the last ten years, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Turkey's external environment has changed more rapidly and radically than any time since the beginning of the Cold War. Significant changes have also occurred in the internal environment, mainly in the area of economy. It is clear that, Turkey has been going through the same stages that developed nations experienced a while ago. Though Turkey was late to embark on that process, both in economic and social matters, it has come a long way since it started. But, being conscious of its present situation and its needs, Turkey has been making noteworthy improvements in its development and democratization process.

Turkey's internal environment can be put into a scheme of combination of several forces that form it. As in the case for the external environmental assessment, here too, only the more relevant forces are going to be discussed in this chapter. These were determined to be the economic and social forces of the internal environment of Turkey. This chapter will identify Turkey's experiences and accomplishments in its evolving internal environment.

### **B. TURKEY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION**

For almost a decade, Turkey has been going through a rapid transformation in the economic field. The liberal economic policies that were initiated in 1980 have since been consolidated. Early in the 1980s, Turkey undertook a comprehensive adjustment program by shifting policies from an inward-oriented stance to an outward-oriented one, by establishing the principles of a free market system and by encouraging the private sector to emphasize its leading role in the economy. The new strategy aimed at a sustainable balance of payments, restoration of international credit-worthiness and balanced economic growth, and finally, the promotion of a stable and secure environment for foreign investment. As was stated several times by the officials, Turkey realized that a free-market economy and democracy were complements of each other. The government removed export-import controls and, in 1989, made the Turkish Lira freely convertible. Another important feature of Turkey's structural adjustment program which may attract foreign investors is the privatization of a number of State Economic Enterprises. Implementation of the programs started in 1988 with the sale of a telecommunications equipment company to the private sector. The sale of two large state

companies, Petkim (petrochemicals) and Sumerbank, a conglomerate operating mainly in the textile and footwear industry are next in line. In the meantime, the policy which has been adopted for the reduction of the role of the public sector, and rationalization of public investment program has been maintained.

### 1. Strengths of the Economic Life

Turkey's economy has been flourishing since the last military rule stepped out of power in 1983, though there are many problems yet to be solved. The remarks of Francois Heisbourg, former director of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, points to this situation: "It's an incredibly lopsided economy, it's in deep trouble--yet it's booming!"<sup>36</sup> We already know that, as was referred to earlier, Turkey is one of the seven countries of the world self-sufficient in food. Turkey has steadily improved this position since food production has more than kept up with a rapidly rising population, even enabling Turkey to have a surplus to export. Agricultural production is of special importance to Turkey due to the increasing population and the great contribution it makes to the national economy. Until 1978, the share of the agricultural sector claimed a top position in GNP. This share, however, has since fallen, due to the increasing emphasis on industrialization, from 21.5% in 1979 to about 15.8% in 1990.<sup>37</sup> The economy grew by 4.6% a year on average through the 1980s, twice the population growth, a performance that no other O.E.C.D. member could match--nor even Japan. After a brief drop-off in 1991, industrial output in the first two quarters of 1992 rose by 10.7% and 6.2%, an achievement that would delight any European country or the United States. American specialists credit the country with having world-competitive textile and construction firms, getting close to the same stage in leather goods design and production, and building a better road system and telecommunications network than many Eastern European nations--or, for that matter, Russia.<sup>38</sup>

Right now Turkey is harvesting the fruits of its experiences on economic liberalization by setting an example to the Central Asians, Caucasians, Eastern Europeans and Russians who visit Ankara and Istanbul in growing numbers. Even though Central Asians compose the majority of these who turn Turkey for information and aid due to their Turkic heritage, other countries from the old Soviet orbit also ask Ankara for guidance on how to accomplish the transition from one-party authoritarianism and state

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<sup>36</sup> Church, Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Turkey, The General Directorate of Press and Information, 1990, p.117.

<sup>38</sup> Church, Ibid.

controlled economy. Says Albert Chernyshev, the Russian Ambassador to Ankara: "Turkey has undergone the first phases of establishing political democracy and free-market economy, and this has been done often in a crisis environment, which is also the case with the C.I.S. countries (the 11 former Soviet republics that form the so-called Commonwealth of Independent States). This kind of model is intriguing even for us. We are looking at the Turkish experience."<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, Turkey has been exploiting the opportunity offered by the new environment. But Ankara is also well aware of Turkey's delicate position in respect to the Central Asian Republics. The government seems to appreciate that a sensitive balance needs to be struck to satisfy the interests of wide variety of groups. It realized that people in the Turkic-speaking republics have great expectations from Turkey especially in the economic realm. On the other hand, most Turkish officials are also quite conscious of the fact that Turkey lacks the kind of economic and human resources needed to meet these expectations. This naturally leaves Turkey dependent on the resources that the West can provide. However, there is also a realization that the West is dependent on Turkey's close relations with Central Asia to steer these countries nearer to the West and to assist efforts to build a stable regional order.

Turkey in particular hopes to be a channel for Western and even Japanese investment to tap the oil, gas and mineral riches of Central Asia, and has focused on policies that are centered around the transfer of the Turkish developmental model with its political and economic aspects to these republics.

The Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP): The government has embarked on the GAP project, which is the largest project ever realized by Turkey, to build 22 dams and 19 power plants, by the end of the decade, on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, at a cost estimated anywhere from 21 billion to 35 billion dollars, with the aim of turning the region from a poorhouse to a powerhouse. It is an integrated project covering agriculture, transportation, housing, industry and other sectors, in addition to the dams, hydroelectric power plants, and irrigation facilities to be build on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and their tributaries. Work continues on twin 26-km (16-mile) tunnels, the world's longest, to carry impounded water to the Harran plain bordering Syria and irrigate 726,000 hectares (1.8 million acres) of land. This massive effort harnessing the Tigris and Euphrates rivers will produce millions of kilowatt-hours of electricity and irrigate millions of acres of land across six southeastern provinces. The effects on Turkey's

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<sup>39</sup> Milliyet, February 11, 1990.

economy and social structure in the near future when Gap is completed will be tremendous, improving the prosperity, nutrition, housing, education, health, transportation, communication, electricity, and other economic and social opportunities of the region, therefore of Turkey. Gap's most important effect on the economy in the short term is expected to be the acceleration of the formation of a development axis in the region.

## **2. Weaknesses of the Economic Life**

On the other hand, Turkey has not been successful enough in curbing inflation which is running at average rate of 60 to 70% a year. To bring inflation under control has been one of the major goals of the successive governments of Turkey, over the last 20 years, since it has a neutralizing effect on the growth. Another problem that Turkey could not solve yet, in spite of its high growth rate is its unemployment, which runs at 7.7%. Turkey also is running a huge budget deficit--14% of GDP, which is well over the 3% limit that the Maastricht treaty imposes on E.C. members. The budget deficit, for the most part, comes from the state-owned economic enterprises (SEES) and subsidiaries they own. About 75% of government's budget deficit is due to the SEES and their subsidies. They control about 40% of Turkey's GNP. Worse, the privatization act to get rid of this burden has been claimed to be kept at a too slow rate by some experts. Nonetheless, some state officials still assure that the SEES would be sold off plant by plant as far as the government can handle these sales.

## **C. TURKEY'S SOCIAL SITUATION**

Turkey represents a good mixture of different nationalities and, to a lesser extent, religions, which ranges from Tartars of Central Asia to Bosnians of Europe. Turkey has a 98% Muslim population. This feature, too, takes its roots from the Ottoman rule over three continents. However, the best side of this ethnic diversity finds itself in the discrimination-free attitude of both the Turkish people and the state. The minorities can easily take roles in all aspects of the social, economic and political life and can continue their lives like an ordinary Turkish citizen. Among these minorities, the Kurdish citizens of Turkey constitutes the largest group, which number between 8 million and 10 million. Southern Anatolia of Turkey is considered to be home of the Kurds, notwithstanding the fact that approximately 60% of them, live in the Western part of the country. They are also pretty well mingled with the Turkish people over most of the country. Other than the ongoing Kurdish unrest in the southern Turkey, both Kurds and Turks generally seem to be content with each other's existence in the same environment.



### **1. Strengths of The Social Life**

The Kurds of Turkey enjoy the best living conditions among the ones living in the Middle East region--in Iraq, Iran and Syria. In Turkey, they enjoy the same rights as other Turkish citizens and have elected 22 of the 450 members of the parliament, although the government long ignored their existence as a separate group, referred to Kurds as "mountain Turks" and banned their language. This ban on the language was the result of the policy of new Turkish Republic after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1922. For the Ottoman Empire, the unifying element of the country's many different nationalities was the Islamic religion. However, for Turkey, the religion was replaced by the language as the unifying element, since the new Turkish Republic claimed to be secular. The Turkish language united 40-45 different nationalities (ethnic groups) which were present inside the boundaries of the new state. Though the ban was revoked in 1992, it will take some time to settle this problem, completely, in all aspects of the social life.

Ankara has taken several steps to handle the issue and developed a series of short-and long-term measures to stop the violence. A new post of regional governor was created in July, 1987, as a short-term measure. It was expected that this new regional governor, who had control over six provinces in the problematic area, would be helpful to coordinate the efforts of the security forces in this area by making them more responsive to the insurgency. With almost every possible legal authority granted to the regional governor, Ankara's war against the PKK has apparently been unable to curtail the insurgency.<sup>40</sup> The long-term measures mainly contains economic development programs for the region. They were planned as complements in two overlapping programs. The first program consists of bringing a basic infrastructure--roads, electricity and schools--to all parts of this region by the end of the decade. The second program is the Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP), which was referred to in the previous section.

### **2. Weaknesses of the Social Life**

The conflict with Kurdish separatists in the southeast Anatolia has been one of the formidable stumbling blocks on Turkey's road to development. The government once tried to pretend that the problem was containable and would soon go away, but the conflict has dragged on for nine years becoming too bloody in some occasions. However, after unilateral ceasefire declaration by PKK, the tense situation has shown

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<sup>40</sup> Briefing (Ankara) , June 18, 1990, No.792, p.3.

signs of thawing during the last four months. But, in the meantime, there were not any promising developments toward settling the problem.

The insurgents call themselves the Kurdish Workers' Party, or P.K.K. It is an Marxist group and emerged in the late 1960s with the goal of winning regional autonomy and, then, establishment of an independent Kurdish state. One might also add to these the eventual goal of uniting the Kurds in the region, who are living in Iraq, Iran and Syria. The area in which it operates is the poorest and most backward, and, maybe, the one with the most religious in people in Turkey. Hence, the PKK did not miss the opportunities to exploit these handicaps, by making changes in their publicly known scheme of being a Marxist group and using religious themes in its propaganda in the area.

The violence began in August, 1984, and has combined several features of modern guerilla warfare that Turkish security forces were not familiar with and, since that time, nearly 5780 people have been killed in the fighting. The most common and popular tactics of the insurgents, especially recently, is a hit-and-run campaign in the rural, sparsely populated countryside. They are getting a substantial amount of foreign support, both in training and materials. Other than from the European countries, they get regional support; they are provided with safe heavens in western Iran, northern Iraq, Syria and the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

Turkey is a country which is trying to find itself a place in either one of the two opposite cultures: East or the West. It was isolated by the Eastern countries from their community almost 70 years ago with the establishment of the new Turkish Republic on secular grounds and was treated as a traitor to Islam. At that time, Turkey did not have any interest to continue its either relations, especially cultural and social, with the Easterners either and separated itself from the Middle East completely with the final event of abolition of the Caliphate, in 1924. Turkey's Western orientation dates back to those days and, since then, it proved its loyalty to the West on several different occasions--the last one was experienced during the Gulf crisis. Today Turkey still retains a strong interest in the Western connection for political, economic and security reasons. But the frustration with Turkey's limited role in Europe has encouraged Turkey to turn to alternative outlets for future cooperation; in the Central Asian Turkic Republics, presumably the Balkans and, perhaps the most differently, the Middle East. Thus, Turkey, after 70 years, again has the East as an alternative to consider.

Now Turkey is at the verge of re-evaluating the two main alternatives and of deciding for which foothold of the bridge--that comes from the notion of Turkey as a bridge between East and West, that Turkey should reside on. Likewise its geographic position, Turkey's two-way stretch continues with this strategic decision of joining the Eastern or Western camp--or both.

However, significant positive changes in the Turkish economy have increased the credibility of Turkey in the international arena. Despite the double burden of the Kurdish insurgency--the cost of extra security measures and the intense investment, Turkey made remarkable progress at coping up with its problems, both politically and economically. Thus, on the one hand, Turkey responded to the need of large scale investments in the Southeastern Anatolia and, on the other hand, carried the burden of all military deployments and operations in the problem area. During the last decade, if the distribution of budgeted government spendings, with regard to the districts, is examined, one can easily see the lopsided spending behavior on the side of the southeastern Turkey.

## **VI. TURKEY'S FUTURE STRATEGY IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

There is an old saying in Turkish, "With a good friend, one can even travel to Baghdad," which means that, in the company of a reliable friend, one can travel long distances. This simple saying pretty much explains the situation that Turkey is in now. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Turkey made its choice and sided with the West. But, as was discussed in the previous chapters, this decision of Turkey did not help too much and, except for NATO, Turkey could not easily improve its ties with the West. Today, after so long, Turkey is again in the position that it is looking for "a good friend" to take the ride together. However, choices are almost the same, as in the beginning: either the West or the East.

In this chapter the strategic issues currently facing Turkey are identified, which is the fifth step in the strategic planning process. These strategic issues form the backbone of the new possible strategies for Turkey. In other words, new strategies can be developed based on these strategic issues.

### **B. THE STRATEGIC ISSUES (STEP 5)**

1. Should Turkey join the EC in the pursuit of its 70-year-old Western oriented stance to accomplish being a part of Europe or, simply, the West? How far should Turkey be pushing for this purpose?

2. Should Turkey, in the case it quits its pro-Western posture, turn to the East, as in the old days, and be the founding member of an Islamic Common Market which includes the Turkic Republics?

3. Should Turkey seek to unite with the Turkic Republics under the same constitution, and in a formation similar to that of the United States?

4. In the reality of a diminishing future role for NATO and of an unpredictable future course for Russia (possibly after restructuring its economy and its relationship with diverse ethnic groups), how should Turkey organize its relationship with NATO? What can Turkey expect from NATO in the future? And what should be Turkey's contribution to NATO?

5. Should Turkey hold on to its efforts to join into the possible European Security Arrangements? or should it look for prospects for regional security arrangements?

6. Should Turkey seek different approaches to resolve the Cyprus problem with Greece? How should it handle the other problematic issues with Greece to help keep the tensions low?

7. Should Turkey actively continue to develop the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Initiative?

8. How should Turkey ensure its security and regional peace in the face of prospects of increasing nationalistic and religious hostilities among the Balkan nations?

9. Should Turkey claim itself as the natural owner of the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, in the same way its Arab neighbors do with the exploration and production oil in their own soil?

10. What kind of measures should Turkey take to best benefit from the economic opportunities offered by both Russia and the Turkic Republics?

It should be noted that there are many other strategic issues beyond these ten. These were identified as being the most relevant at this time.

#### **C. IDENTIFICATION OF THE POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR TURKEY (STEP 6)**

So far by moving through the strategic planning process, we have arrived at the final step of the process. Now, in the light of the strategic issues facing Turkey, the various possible strategies for Turkey could be defined by selecting from the existing strategic issues. The purpose here is not to discuss them one by one, but, to shed light on the strategies that are most vital for locating Turkey's future place in the evolving regional formations. Hence, these possible vital strategies are described as follows:

1. The first possible strategy is to maintain relations with the West as before and be a part of it.
2. The second possible strategy is to turn to the Islamic World and make its fortune with the Arab neighbors.
3. The third possible strategy is to unite with the Turkic Republics under a federal system.

Turkey, now, is at the critical point of deciding for its new strategy. But, here, the purpose is not to reach an absolute solution but to assess the alternatives and leave the critical selection to the leadership of Turkey.

#### D. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR TURKEY

1. The first strategy: to maintain relations with West as before and be a part of it

"You can find the same things here as you can find in Europe--everything from airports to credit cards," says President Turgut Ozal, and continues "Today Turkey is a European Country."<sup>41</sup> It is also conceivable that rather than sharing the idea of the President, some conservative groups think that turning to the Arab world is a possible alternative. "Turkey's place is not in Europe, but in the Islamic world" says Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the right-wing, pro-Islamic Welfare Party. And he adds, "Turkey's role should be to lead the Islamic world into the formation of a Muslim common market."<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, although its blend of East and West has admirers in both directions, there are others who find its society too hybrid to qualify for full membership in either world, let alone both at once.

Just as some forces are pushing Turkey to turn its back on the West, there are many in the West ready to forget Turkey. "When it began to appear that NATO isn't the most important thing in the world anymore, there was a tendency to push Turkey aside. It is seen as poor, Islamic and non-European," a U.S. official says. "And that is a short-sighted view."<sup>43</sup> Since the time of Hero at the Hellespont, Europeans have been clear that the stretch of water from the Bosphorus to the Dardanelles is the borderline of Europe with Asia. But the Turkish side believes that this view is a matter of perception and if the perception is changed, the drawn line will also be shifted in the minds of Europeans.

In Europe the E.C. members have been stalling for five years on admitting Turkey to full membership. The Community, not wishing to be accused of racial and religious bias, promised to take the issue on a latter date after postponing the recent discussions. Now it looks like Turkey stands at the end of lengthening line of would-be members; first come the European neutrals (Austria, Switzerland, Sweden), Finland, possibly Norway, and, then, some of the formerly communist nations of Eastern Europe in the line. What Turks think and the Europeans say is the same thing; that Turkey has no chance of winning admittance before the turn of the century. But the sentiment of

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<sup>41</sup> Church, Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Cohen, Sam, "Turks Weigh Prospects After European Rebuff", The Christian Science Monitor, July 24, 1990, p.4.

<sup>43</sup> Greenberger, S., Robert, "Turkey May Reap Major Rewards From Gulf War", The Wall Street Journal, Jan 21, 1991, p.A10.

most Europeans, which is rarely stated explicitly, is clear: those Turks do not belong at our party. There are others who agree with Udo Steinbach, director of the Institute for Middle Eastern Studies in Hamburg, who says, "Let's be straightforward about it. The chances of Turkey becoming a member of the European Community are absolutely zero."<sup>44</sup> "There is just a basic dislike of the Turks, and so the Europeans are giving them the back of the hand" says a U.S. official.<sup>45</sup> In the light of this cold reality, Turkish officials, in several occasions, made it clear that Turkey is not addicted to the idea of full membership of the EC, adding that the world is not composed only of Europe.

As referred to earlier, several reasons account for this attitude of Europeans against Turkey. For all its growth, Turkey's living standards, though high by Third World norms, are still well below Western Europe's. Consequently, some countries fear that E.C. membership would require them to pump huge sums into Turkey's economy or open their borders to migrant Turkish workers seeking a better life, or both. Worse, there is a less respectable reason for resistance to Turkish E.C. membership, which could be expressed in one word; religion. Turks are Muslims and have fought with Europe ever since the first crusade. But unless the European Community is going to say that its membership is confined to Christians, being Muslim does not disqualify Turkey. However, there is a feeling in Western Europe that Muslims, whose roots lie in Asia--mainly Arabia, do not belong in the Western family, *some of whose members spent centuries trying to drive the Turks out of a Europe they threatened to overwhelm.*

However, the recent developments in Europe and the Middle East once more confirmed the Western image in the minds of Muslim nations that the West has, as it was in the past, still been indifferent to the problems of the Muslim countries, unless their interests are at stake. While the second Holocaust in the Bosnia-Herzegovina has been going on in the heart of Europe for more than a year, the Westerners stuck fast to so called "peace plan" at the cost of lives of innocent civilians. On the other hand, what we saw in Iraq is very much contrary to the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina; the West swiftly united to enforce the UN resolutions over Iraq. In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina they limited themselves to "peace keeping", "humanitarian aid" and a "safe-haven" program, each of which apparently helped to the Serbians' interests more than the Bosnians'. Many Turks view the recent events in Bosnia as the latest of a series of Western prejudices and Crusade approach to Islam and the Turkic culture, which

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<sup>44</sup> Church, Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Greenberger, Ibid.

Turkey had previously experienced through the Armenian and Cyprus issues. If this is true, then Turkey should be very careful not to face another discrimination from West before it is too late.

Thus, the point is that Turkey, in case it picks this strategy, should be aware of the contingency that, by the time it carries no more value to the West, they will not hesitate to neglect and discriminate against Turkey. So, this strategy brings along the risks of no gain in the end.

**2. The Second strategy: to turn to the Islamic World and make its fortune with the Arab neighbors**

As a senior government official sums it up: "The world does not consist of Europe and the EC. There are many regions and many opportunities with its geopolitical position, which is now regaining importance, Turkey has several cards to play."<sup>46</sup> Though Turkey has been working to arrange for closer ties with Middle East and Islamic countries, Muslim neighbors, meanwhile, have seen the Turks as traitors to Islam since Ataturk founded modern Turkey as a secular state.

Beyond that, Turkey's fast development and commitment to become the Japan of the region is reminding Europeans and the Arabs of the old days, when the Ottoman Empire was a world power, both of whom once paid reluctant tribute to the Sultan in the Sublime Porte. The Europeans may not now want a powerful Turkey in the Middle East region while the Arabs are worried about "neo-Ottomanism", although, they do not consider Turkey as religious enough to be the leader of the Muslim world. Says Juan Campo, a professor at the Center for Arabic Studies of the American University in Cairo: "Even Egypt has more of a basis in Shari'a (Koranic law) than Turkey."<sup>47</sup> It is true that Turkey is a blend of both religious and western cultures, and that sometimes it is confusing to see these different cultures existing together. People, mostly, wear western style clothes, such as young women in shorts walk the streets and stores sell liquor and Playboy magazine, while the call to prayer echoes through those same streets five times a day from mosques. Some of these mosques, like the Suleymaniye in Istanbul, are among the most venerated in Islam.

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<sup>46</sup> Cohen, Sam, "If EC Won't Dance, Turkey Will Seek Other Partners", The Christian Science Monitor, Oct 23, 1990, p.5.

<sup>47</sup> Church, Ibid.



Even if Turkey seems not European enough to some in the West, in parts of the Muslim world it looks altogether too European. As in Europe, in, also, the Middle East there are economic and political reasons for Turkey to fall short of full acceptance. To the south and east Turkey has troublesome neighbors: Syria, Iraq and Iran. Turkey competes actively with Iran for influence in other Muslim countries, and it allowed U.S. planes to fly out of the Incirlik air base to bomb Iraq during the Gulf War. Today loyally supporting the world quarantine of Saddam Hussein's regime, it keeps closed one of the major pipelines through which Iraqi oil used to flow to world markets. Syria and Iraq accuse Turkey of damming the Euphrates River and planning to dam the Tigris, keeping for itself water they need for irrigation. Ankara in turn accuses them and Iran of giving aid and comfort to Kurdish insurgents in Turkey.

As a result of unimproving relations with the West, Turkey finds itself in a somewhat similar situation when the republic was established in 1923. Now it is time for Turkey to reconsider its relations with its centuries old Arab brothers. If the leadership of Turkey misses this opportunity and fails to set up a delicate balance in its relations with the Middle Easterners, this might damage Turkey's already uneasy relations with the East, and lead to more lopsided relations for Turkey on the Western side.

### **3. The third strategy: to unite with the Turkic Republics under a federal system**

A second way in which Turkish politics and Turkish foreign policy have been affected by Turkey's possible inclination to the East is that it has put the controversial issue of the possible rise of pan-Turkism back on the political agenda. A debate within Turkey has reerupted over the nature and ultimate purpose of the development of relations between Turkey and these republics. By and large there appears to be a consensus in the public opinion that the establishment of some kind of a political union of Turkic states would be detrimental to Turkish interests as well as to the quality of relations between Turkey and these countries. This consensus reflects the idea that these countries have remained under control of a big brother for 70 years and emergence of another one would not bring them any benefit. Furthermore, many in Turkey also recognize that even if politically and economically these republics may have a lot to learn from Turkey, it is Turkey that has something to learn from them, especially in certain areas of arts and sciences. Hence, the nature of the relationship that seems to be envisaged is one that would be based on equality where the enhancement of cultural and social contacts would be the primary goal.

On the other hand, there is also an expectation on the part of the public that there would be efforts made to nurture a certain degree of political solidarity between Turkey and these republics at the international level. This expectation of greater political cooperation in international politics is already being put into practice in a number of ways. The Turkish government has tried to coordinate with the Turkic speaking republics its foreign policy both on the Armenian-Azeri conflict and the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. There are also the early signs of an effort led by Turkey to form an informal Turkic caucus to operate in international forums. The best example of this was demonstrated at the last Helsinki Summit when the Turkish delegation led by the Prime Minister got together with the intention of coordinating their work.<sup>48</sup> This obviously is not the sole example.

Similar cooperation and coordination efforts have also been observed during Islamic Conference Organization meetings as well as at the United Nations. Turkey succeeded in getting the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) Parliamentary Assembly to accept, in principle, Turkish as an official language.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry is running training programs for diplomats from these republics which undoubtedly is also providing the basis for future cooperation on foreign policy issues of common concern.

This relatively sudden intensification of relations between Turkey and Turkic republics has not gone unnoticed in international circles. There has been frequent voicing of worries that political pan-Turkism is on the rise. The fact that in Turkey there are some small right wing extreme nationalist groups who are vocal advocates of political pan-Turkist ideals have highlighted these worries. Pan-Turkism of an extreme kind has been of particular concern to Russia. Some Russian officials see such pan-Turkism as a possible source of threat to its political interests in Central Asia and to Russian communities living in Central Asia. Furthermore, Russian authorities are also concerned that pan-Turkism might have an adverse affect on its relations with Turkic speaking communities in Russia itself.

Just as efforts to increase cooperation between Turkey and the Turkic Republics has become a significant aspects of post Cold War Turkish foreign policy, there is also

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<sup>48</sup> Hurriyet , July 10, 1992.

<sup>49</sup> Milliyet , July 4, 1992.

a clear consciousness among Turkish diplomats and government officials that these efforts must not be pursued in a manner that is threatening to other countries. In this respect it is possible to identify a number of elements in Turkish foreign policy behavior that seems to be geared towards reassuring regional governments that Turkish efforts to develop its relations with the Turkic Republics should not be seen as threatening and that the Turkish government does not harbor any political pan-Turkist goals.<sup>50</sup> Turkey's historical relations with Russia has made the Turkish government particularly sensitive to Russian interests. Hence, the Turkish government was very cautious in its foreign policy during the disintegration of the Soviet Union and consciously refrained from any acts that could have been misconstrued by the governing leadership in Moscow. Turkish recognition of break away republics were granted in close coordination with Moscow and without discriminating between Turkic Republics and the others. Furthermore, Turkey on a bilateral level has regularly kept the Russian government informed of its policies toward Central Asia. This approach was reiterated by the Prime Minister during his visit to Moscow in May 1992.

In this new environment Turkey's choices diversified as well. The new horizons on the east, which have been long envisioned, brought along new opportunities that Turkey might benefit from. The collapse of the Soviet Union might help to materialize a 70-year-old Turkish dream, which is uniting all Turkish lands under the same flag, by causing the Turkic Republics to gain their independence from Russia. Turkey's historical, ethnic and religious ties with these republics cannot be underestimated in this context. But, since every opportunity has a price to be paid, this new strategy, too, may also be burdened with unforeseeable difficulties if adopted.

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<sup>50</sup> Cetin, Hikmet, Nato Review , p.12.

## E. SUMMARY

The end of the Cold War brought about a fundamentally altered international environment. It is this new environment, characterized with considerable instability and insecurity, that causes Turkey to reconsider its strategy. However, to attribute the possible changes on Turkey's strategy solely to external factors would give an incomplete picture. There are also factors that have to do with Turkey itself.

The changing domestic political environment and the growing confidence in the new economic and political regime have also had a role to play in the need to reconsider Turkey's strategy. One another domestic factor that could be taken into consideration is the gradual development of public confidence in Turkey's role and place in international politics. The dramatic changes in Eastern Europe initially made Turks apprehensive and insecure that they were again being left behind. The fact that the European Commission's unfavorable decision on Turkish membership coincided with speculations that many ex-communist countries might be admitted to the European Community well before Turkey did contribute to this state of mind. However, as the dust and euphoria in Eastern Europe settled and they began to face serious political, economic difficulties many in Turkey as well as abroad began to take recognition of distances covered by Turkey in respect to democracy and liberal economy, two important values of over which the Cold War was fought.

Of course, the arrival of the Turkic Republics on to the scene gave an added boost to this sense of confidence. The string of politicians and diplomats from a wide range of countries visiting Turkey and seeking benefit from its experiences were factors that, for the first time in Turkey's post Second World War history, led to recognize that the possibility of playing a bridging role between East and West was not any more a meaningless talk. The Turkish elite had always liked to believe that Turkey was a bridge between East and West in all senses of the word. Geographically, this was probably true but politically Turkey had never been more than the military outpost at the frontiers of the "wild and dangerous East".

Now, Turkey, though it has not given out a distinct sign that it is ready to adopt a new strategy yet, is at the edge of making a decision as a result of all those changes, both external and internal, which have been discussed so far. If one were merely to guess what Turkey's strategy might be in near future, the prediction would be that Turkey will, most probably, stay committed to the West.

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